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THE
WORKS,
OF
THOMAS PAINE,

CONTAINING

COMMON SENSE.
ANSWER TO THE ABBE RAYNAL.
LETTER TO THE MARQUIS OF
LANSDOWNE.
TO THE AUTHORS OF THE RE-
PUBLICAN.
TO THE ABBE SYEYES.
PART I. RIGHTS OF MAN.
PART II. RIGHTS OF MAN.

ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS,
ON THE LATE PROCLAMATION.
PART I. AGE OF REASON.
PART II. AGE OF REASON.
DISSERTATION ON FIRST-PRIN-
CIPLES, OF GOVERNMENT.
HISTORICAL WITH THE ARGUMENTS
OF COUNSEL FOR AND AGAINST.

*Man knows no Master save creating HEAVEN,
Or those whom choice and common Good ordain.*

THOMSON.

L O N D O N.

1796



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INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power, is generally the Means of calling the right of it in question (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the Sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry) and as the K— of England had undertaken in his *own Right*, to support the Parliament in what he calls *Theirs*, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either.

In the following sheets, the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves, Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise, and the worthy, need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious, or unfriendly, will cease of themselves unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all Lovers of Mankind are affected, and in the Event of which, their Affections are interested. The laying a Country desolate with Fire and Sword, declaring War against the natural rights of all Mankind, and extirpating the Defenders thereof from the Face of the Earth, is the Concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling; of which Class, regardless of Party Censure, is the

AUTHOR.

P. S. The Publication of this new Edition hath been delayed, with a View of taking notice (had it been necessary) of any Attempt to refute the Doctrine of Independance: As no Answer hath yet appeared, it is now presumed that none will, the Time needful for getting such a Performance ready for the Public being considerably past.

Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the Object for Attention is the *Doctrine itself*, not the *Man*. Yet it may not be unnecessary to say, That he is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of Influence public or private, but the influence of reason and principle.

PHILADELPHIA, February 14, 1776.

1917 COLLECTION

The following is a list of the books in the collection for the year 1917.

Books received from the Library of Congress

1. The History of the United States by James O. Easton

2. The Constitution of the United States by Charles A. Beard

3. The American People by Howard Chandler Christy

4. The American Republic by John Jay

5. The American Revolution by John Jay

6. The American Republic by John Jay

7. The American Republic by John Jay

8. The American Republic by John Jay

9. The American Republic by John Jay

10. The American Republic by John Jay

11. The American Republic by John Jay

12. The American Republic by John Jay

13. The American Republic by John Jay

14. The American Republic by John Jay

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P A I N E ' s W O R K S .

C O M M O N S E N S E .

Of the Origin and Design of Government in General. With concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country *without government*, our calamities are heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uni-

form, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other law-giver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expence and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto, the strength of

one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but *one* man might labour out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it; nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune would be death, for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-House, under the branches of which, the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters.

It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of REGULATIONS, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man, by natural right, will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often; because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflexion of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally

support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of king) depends the *strength of government, and the happiness of the governed.*

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and of reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected is granted. When the world was over-run with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the

fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

First.—The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

Secondly.—The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

Thirdly.—The new republican materials, in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independant of the people; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a *union* of three powers reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical, either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes *two* things.

First.—That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

Secondly.—That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check

the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus; the king, say they, is one, the people another; the peers are an house in behalf of the king; the commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. How came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check? Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power,

which needs checking, be from God; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se*; for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavours will be ineffectual; the first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident, wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favour of their own government by king, lords, and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the *will* of the king is as much the *law* of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the most formida-

ble shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the First, hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government* that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the constitutional errors in the English form of govern-

ment is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance; the distinctions of rich, and poor, may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into **KINGS** and **SUBJECTS**. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new

species, is worth enquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ^kges of the world, according to the scripture chronology, there were no kings; the consequence of which was there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favors the same remark: for the quiet and rural lives of the first patriarchs hath a happy something in them, which vanishes away when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the Heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the Devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The heathens paid divine

honors to their deceased kings, and the christian world hath improved on the plan by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of *sacred majesty* applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by kings. All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their governments yet to form. "*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's*" is the scriptural doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews under a national delusion requested a king. Till then their form of government (except in extraordinary cases, where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of republic administered by a judge and the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of Kings, he need not wonder, that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honor, should disapprove of a form of government which so

impiously invades the prerogative of heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory, thro' the divine interposition, decided in his favour. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, *Rule thou over us, thou and thy son and thy son's son*. Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but an hereditary one, but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU*. Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not decline the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive stile of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper sovereign the King of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were entrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, *Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations*.

And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, viz. that they might be like unto other nations, i. e. the Heathens, whereas their true glory laid in being as much unlike them as possible. But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a king to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day; wherewith they have forsaken me and served other Gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them, i. e. not of any particular king, but the general manner of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion, And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a king. And he said, This shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you; he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) and he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots; and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries and to be cooks and to be bakers (this describes the expence and luxury as well as the oppression of kings) and he will take your fields and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants; and will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants (by which we see that bribery, corruption, and favoritism are the standing vices of kings) and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work; and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye have chosen, AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY." This accounts for the continuation of monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good kings which we have since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of David takes no notice of him officially as a king, but only as a man after God's own heart. Nevertheless the People refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles. Samuel continued to reason with them, but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, I will call upon the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain (which then was a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) that ye may perceive and see that your wick-

edness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, IN ASKING YOU A KING. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING. These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft, as priest-craft in withholding the scripture from the public in Popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the Popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and an imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, *no one by birth* could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and though himself might deserve *some* decent degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest *natural* proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an *ass for a lion*.

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honors than

were bestowed upon him, *so the givers of those honors could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say, "We choose you for our head," they could not, without manifest injustice to their children, say "that your children and your children's children shall reign over ours for ever."* Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men, in their private sentiments, have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils, which when once established is not easily removed; many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honourable origin; whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity, and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners or pre-eminence in subtilty obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who by increasing in power, and extending his depredations, *over-awed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions.* Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a

matter of claim, but as something casual or complimentary; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history stuffed with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale, conveniently timed, Mahomet like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favor hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience, was afterwards claimed as a right.

England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones, yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French bastard, landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original.—It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right, if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz. either by lot, by election; or by usurpation. If the first king was

taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say, that the right of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to Sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonourable rank! Inglorious connexion! Yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men, it

would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency, acting under the cover of a king, have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortune happens, when a king worn out with age and infirmity, enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases the public becomes a prey to every miscreant, who can tamper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea, which hath ever been offered in favour of hereditary succession, is that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas, it is the most barefaced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been (including the Revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Wherefore instead of making

for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand on.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles, besides skirmishes and sieges, were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war and the temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as sudden transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh, in whom the families were united. Including a period of 67 years, viz. from 1422 to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only) but the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we inquire into the business of a king, we shall find that in some countries they have none; and after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle round. In absolute monarchies

the whole weight of business civil and military, lies on the king; the children of Israel in their request for a king, urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge nor a general, as in E——d, a man would be puzzled to know what is his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of E——d. Sir William Meredith calls it a republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the house of commons, (the republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out

with names without understanding them. For it is the republican and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, viz. the liberty of choosing an house of commons from out of their own body—and it is easy to see that when the republican virtue fails, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of E——d fickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the republic, the crown hath engrossed the commons?

In England a k— hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.

IN the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off*, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It has been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who tho' an able mi-

nister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons, on the score, that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed time of continental union, faith and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new æra for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, *i. e.* to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of the last year; which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz. a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the

other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right, that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with, and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connexion and dependance, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connexion with Great-Britain, the same connexion is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert, that because a child has thrived upon milk, it is never to have meat; or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is

true, and defended the continent at our expence as well as her own is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, viz. the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas, we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great-Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest* not *attachment*; that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account*, but from *her enemies* on *her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Britain wave her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connexions.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, *i. e.* that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps never will be our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great-Britain*.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore the assertion, if true, turns to her re-

proach: but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the — and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of *three hundred and sixty miles* (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudice, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbour*; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman*; if he travels out of the county, and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, *i. e.* *countyman*; but if in their foreign

excursions they should associate in France or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen*. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen*; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: And to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants to support the Bri-

tish arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a *free port*. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to shew a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: Because, any submission to or dependance on Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom, we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Britain*. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because, neutrality in that case, would be a safer conveyance than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one, over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled encreases the force of it. The reformation was preceded by the discovery of America; as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great-Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that *this government* is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next

generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect, which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men who *cannot* see; prejudiced men who *will not* see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to *their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us for a few moments to *Boston*, that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. *Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it.* In their present condition they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they

would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "*Come, we shall be friends again for all this.*" But examine the passions and feelings of mankind. Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we

should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or Europe to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from the former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connexion, and Art cannot supply her place. For as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconciliation grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute. Wit-

ness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary, we thought so at the repeal of the stamp-act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well we may suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: The business of it will soon be too weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power, so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness—There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that every thing short of *that* is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity,—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expence of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expence. The removal of N—, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade, was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently ballanced the repeal of all the acts complained of; had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly, do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a bunker-hill price for law, as for land. As I have always considered the independency of this continent, as an event, which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far

off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter, which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April 1775*, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, fullen tempered Pharaoh of ——— for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the k—, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And as he hath shewn himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power; is he or is he not, a proper man to say to these colonies, “*You shall make no laws but what I please.*” And is there any inhabitants in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what is called the *present constitution*, that this continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to; and is there any man so unwise, as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no Law to be

made here, but such as suit his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarreling or ridiculously petitioning.—We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavour to make us less? To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No* to this question is an *independant*, for independancy means no more, than, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the ———, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us “*there shall be no laws but such as I like.*”

But the k—you will say has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, tho’ I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer, that England being the king’s residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The k—’s negative *here* is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England, for *there* he will scarce-

* Massacre at Lexington.

ly refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics. England consults the good of *this* country, no farther than it answers her *own* purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours* in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interfere with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to shew that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the k— at this time to repeal the act, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces*; in order, that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTILTY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly, That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. *Richd Emigrants* Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabi-

tants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independence, *i. e.* a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable, that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here: for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up connexion than

than from independance. I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority, perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Swisserland are without wars, foreign or domestic: Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest; the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances, where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independance, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out—Wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints: at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the

straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve to useful matter.

LET the assemblies be annual, with a President only. The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to Congress, so that each colony send at least thirty. The whole number in Congress will be at least 390. Each Congress to sit

and to choose a president by the following method. When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which let the whole Congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of that province. In the next Congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony from which the president was taken in the former Congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three-fifths of the Congress to be called a majority.—He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would join Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent, that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is between the Congress and the people, let a CONTINENTAL

CONFERENCE be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose:

A committee of twenty-six members of Congress, viz. two for each colony. Two members for each house of assembly, or Provincial convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each province, for, and in behalf of the whole province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united, the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The members of Congress, Assemblies, or Conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being empowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a *CONTINENTAL CHARTER*, or Charter of the United Colonies; (answering to what is called the *Magna Charta* of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of Congress, members of Assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: (Always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial:) Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators

and governors of this continent for the time being; Whose peace and happiness, may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments, *Dragonetti*. "The science," says he, "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expence."

Dragonetti on Virtue and Rewards."

But where, says some, is the King of America? I'll tell you, Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal — of Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America THE LAW IS KING, for as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be King; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become con-

vinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some * Massanello may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the continent, that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and Negroes to destroy us; the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded through a thousand pores instruct us to detest, is madness and folly.

Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them, and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore us to the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated the earth, or have only a casual existence, were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and murderer, would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is over-run with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa,

* Thomas Anello, otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became King.

have long expelled her.—Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Of the present Ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.

I HAVE never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries, would take place one time or other: And there is no instance in which we have shewn less judgment, than in endeavouring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the Continent for independence.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavour if possible, to find out the *very* time. But we need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the *time hath found us*. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

It is not in numbers but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The Continent hath, at this time, the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven; and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter, and either more, or, less than this, might be fatal in its effects. Our land force is already sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible, that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built while the continent remained in her hands.

Wherefore we should be no forwarder an hundred years hence in that branch, than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing, and that which will remain at last, will be far off and difficult to procure.

Were the continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more sea port towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none; and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs, from which, they derive no advantage. Such a thought is unworthy a man of honor, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a peddling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt: A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt; she has a large navy; America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth, at this time, more than three millions and an half sterling.

[The first and second editions of this pamphlet were published without the following calculations, which are now given as a proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. See *Entick's naval history*, intro. page 56.]

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails and rigging, together with a proportion of eight months boatswain's and carpenter's sea-stores, as calculated by Mr. Burchett, Secretary to the navy.

	£.
For a ship of 100 guns —	35,553
90 — —	29,886
80 — —	23,638
70 — —	17,785
60 — —	14,197
50 — —	10,606
40 — —	7,558
30 — —	5,846
20 — —	3,710

And from hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost rather, of the whole British navy, which in the year 1757,

when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns;

Ships.	Guns.	Cost of one.	Cost of all.
6 —	100 —	55,553 <i>l.</i>	— 213,318 <i>l.</i>
12 —	90 —	29,886	— 358,632
12 —	80 —	23,638	— 283,656
43 —	70 —	17,785	— 764,755
35 —	60 —	14,197	— 496,895
40 —	50 —	10,605	— 424,240
45 —	40 —	7,558	— 340,110
58 —	20 —	3,710	— 215,180
85 Sloops, bombs, and fireships, one with another, at		2,000 170,000	
		Cost 3,266,786	
Remains for guns,		— 233,214	
		Total, 3,500,000	

No country on the globe is so happily situated, so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building of a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. It is the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost. And is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one-fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, Captain Death, stood the

hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active land-men in the common work of a ship. Wherefore, we never can be more capable to begin on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war of seventy and eighty guns were built forty years ago in New-England, and why not the same now? Ship-building is America's greatest pride, and in which, she will in time excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivaling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she has withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal of both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore, her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather; and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors and windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia

under instant contribution, for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole Continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some, perhaps, will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can we be so unwise as to mean, that she shall keep a navy in our harbours for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavoured to subdue us, is of all others the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbours, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore, if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship: and not a fifth part, of such as are fit for service, can be spared on any one station at one time. The East, and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have

contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and for that reason, supposed that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, have been made use of by a set of disguised Tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be farther from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an overmatch for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over, before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West-Indies, which, by laying in the neighbourhood of the Continent, is entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants, to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty or fifty guns, (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchants) fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guard ships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet, in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into

each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this Continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shews the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves, that nothing but Continental authority can regulate Continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which instead of being lavished by the king—on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the Colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so, we might be less united. It is a matter worthy

of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men become too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit, both of patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. With the increase of commerce, England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed time of good habits, as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the Continent into one government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against colony. Each being able might scorn each other's assistance: and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore, the *present time* is the *true time* for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are, of all others, the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our

troubles, and fixes a memorable æra for posterity to glory in.

The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time, which never happens to a nation but once, *viz.* the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas, the articles or charter of government, should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations, let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*To begin government at the right end.*

When William the conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and until we consent that the seat of government in America, be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of all government, to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty, that there should

among us: It affords a larger field for our christian kindness. Were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principle, I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only, in what is called their Christian names.

In Page twenty-one, I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a Continental Charter, (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place, I take the liberty of rementioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, personal freedom, or property. A firm bargain and a right reckoning make long friends.

In a former page I likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of the representatives be not only small but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following; when the Associators petition was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania; twenty-eight members only were present, all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two counties only, and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which that house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the De-

legates of that province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for the Delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonored a school-boy, and after being approved by a few, a very few without doors, were carried into the House, and there passed in behalf of the whole colony; whereas, did the whole colony know, with what ill-will that House hath entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several Houses of Assembly for that purpose, and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this Continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well wisher to good order, must own, that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those, who make a study of mankind, whether representation and election is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the Lords of the Treasury) treated the diversity of religious opinions

the petition of the New-York Assembly with contempt, because *that* House, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty*.

To CONCLUDE, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given, to shew, that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independance. Some of which are,

First.—It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace: but while America calls herself the subject of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state we may quarrel on for ever.

Secondly.—It is unreasonable to suppose, that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

Thirdly.—While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eye of foreign nations, be considered as rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their* peace, for men to be in arms under

the name of subjects; we on the spot, can solve the paradox: but to unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly.—Were a manifesto to be published and dispatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceable methods we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring, at the same time, that not being able, to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the B—sh court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her; at the same time assuring all such courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them: Such a memorial would produce more good effects to this Continent, than if a ship were freighted with Petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects we can neither be received nor heard abroad: The custom of all courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independance, we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first appear strange and difficult; but, like all other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable; and, until an independance is declared, the Continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

* Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a state, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions, 3 vols. 8vo.

A P P E N D I X.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather, on the same day on which it came out, the —'s Speech made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth, at a more seasonable juncture, or a more necessary time. The bloody mindedness of the one, shew the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge. And the speech instead of terrifying, prepared a way for the manly principles of Independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motive they may arise, have a hurtful tendency, when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances; wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows, that the —'s speech, as being a piece of finished villainy, deserved, and still deserves, a general execration both by the Congress and the people. Yet as the domestic tranquillity of a nation, depends greatly on the chastity of what may properly be called NATIONAL MANNERS, it is often better, to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation, on that guardian of our peace and safety. And perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that the —'s Speech, hath before now, suffered a

public execution. The Speech, if it may be called one, is nothing better than a wilful audacious libel against the truth, the common good, and the existence of mankind; and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants. But this general massacre of mankind, is one of the privileges, and the certain consequences of K—s; for as nature knows them *not*, they know *not her*, and although they are beings of our *own* creating, they know not *us*, and are become the gods of their creators. The speech hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive, neither can we, if we would, be deceived by it. Brutality and tyranny appear on the face of it. It leaves us at no loss: And every line convinces, even in the moment of reading, that He who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less a Savage than the — of B—.

Sir J—n D———e, the putative father of a whining jesuitical piece, fallaciously called, "*The Address of the people of ENGLAND to the inhabitants of AMERICA*," hath, perhaps from a vain supposition, that the people *here* were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given, (though very unwisely on his part) the real character of the present one: "But," says this writer, if you are inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which we do

not complain of," (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's at the repeal of the Stamp Act) "it is very unfair in you to withhold them from that prince, *by whose* NOD ALONE *they were permitted to do any thing,*" this is toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry even without a mask: And he who can calmly hear, and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality—an apostate from the order of manhood; and ought to be considered—as one, who hath, not only given up the proper dignity of a man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawl through the world like a worm.

However, it matters very little now, what the — of E—— either says or does; he hath wickedly broken through every moral and human obligation, trampled nature and conscience beneath his feet; and by a steady and constitutional spirit of insolence and cruelty, procured for himself an universal hatred. It is *now* the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property, to support a power who is become a reproach to the names of men and christians—YE, whose office it is to watch over the morals of a nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are, as well as ye, who are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if ye wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation—But leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my farther remarks to the following heads.

First, That it is the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

Secondly, Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION & INDEPENDENCE? with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent; and whose sentiments, on that head, are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position: For no nation in a state of foreign dependence, limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is; and although the progress which she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood, compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative powers in her own hands. England is, at this time, proudly coveting what would do her no good, were she to accomplish it; and the Continent hesitating on a matter, which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America, by which England is to be benefited, and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independant of each other as France and Spain; because in many articles, neither can go to a better market. But it is the independance of this country on Britain or any other, which is now the main and only object worthy of contention, and which, like all other truths discovered by necessity, will appear clearer and stronger every day.

First. Because it will come to that one time or other.

Secondly, Because the longer it is delayed the harder it will be to accomplish.

I have frequently amused myself both in public and private companies, with silently remarking the specious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, viz. that had this rupture happened forty or fifty years hence, instead of *now*, the Continent would have been more able to have shaken off the dependance. To which I reply, that our military ability *at this time*, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which in forty or fifty years time, would have been totally extinct. The Continent would not, by that time, have had a General, or even a military officer left; and we, or those who may succeed us, would have been as ignorant of martial matters as the antient Indians: And this single position, closely attended to, will unanswerably prove, that the present time is preferable to all others. The argument turns thus—at the conclusion of the last war, we had experience, but wanted numbers; and forty or fifty years hence, we should have numbers, without experience; wherefore, the proper point of time, must be some particular point between the two extremes, in which a sufficiency of the former remains, and a proper increase of the latter is obtained: And that point of time is the present time.

The reader will pardon this digression, as it does not properly come under the head I first set out with,

and to which I again return the following position, viz.

Should affairs be patched up with Britain, and she remain the governing and sovereign power of America, (which as matters are now circumstanced, is giving up the point entirely) we shall deprive ourselves of the very means of sinking the debt we have or may contract. The value of the back lands which some of the provinces are clandestinely deprived of, by the unjust extension of the limits of Canada, valued only at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, amount to upwards of twenty-five millions, Pennsylvania currency; and the quit-rents at one penny sterling per acre, to two millions yearly.

It is by the sale of those lands that the debt may be sunk, without burthen to any, and the quit-rent reserved thereon, will always lessen, and in time, will wholly support the yearly expence of government. It matters not how long the debt is in paying, so that the lands when sold be applied to the discharge of it, and for the execution of which, the Congress for the time being, will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, viz. Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION or INDEPENDENCE? with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer generally—That INDEPENDENCE being a SINGLE SIMPLE LINE, contained within ourselves; and reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which, a treacher-

ous capricious court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.

The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflexion. Without law, without government, without any other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by courtesy. Held together by an unexampled concurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavouring to dissolve. Our present condition, is, Legislation without law; wisdom without a plan; a constitution without a name; and, what is strangely astonishing, perfect Independence contending for Dependence. The instance is without a precedent; the case never existed before; and who can tell what may be the event? The property of no man is secure in the present unbraced system of things. The mind of the multitude is left at random, and seeing no fixed object before them, they pursue such as fancy or opinion starts. Nothing is criminal; there is no such thing as treason; wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The Tories dared not to have assembled offensively, had they known that their lives, by that act were forfeited to the laws of the state. A line of distinction should be drawn, between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings which gives encouragement to dissensions. The Continental belt is too loosely buckled. And

if something is not done in time, it will be too late to do any thing, and we shall fall into a state, in which, neither *reconciliation* nor *independence* will be practicable. The — and his worthless adherents are got at their old game of dividing the Continent, and there are not wanting among us, Printers, who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letter which appeared a few months ago in two of the New-York papers, and likewise in two others, is an evidence that there are men who want either judgment or honesty.

It is easy getting into holes and corners and talking of reconciliation: But do such men seriously consider, how difficult the task is, and how dangerous it may prove, should the Continent divide thereon. Do they take within their view, all the various orders of men whose situation and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein. Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose *all* is *already* gone, and of the soldier, who hath quitted *all* for the defence of his country. If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations *only*, regardless of others, the event will convince them, that “they are reckoning without their Host.”

Put us, says some, on the footing we were on in sixty-three: To which I answer, the request is not *now* in the power of Britain to comply with, neither will she propose it; but if it were, and even should be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question, By what means is such a corrupt and faithless court to be kept to its engagements? Another parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter re-

peal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or unwisely granted; and in that case, Where is our redress?—No going to law with nations; cannon are the barristers of crowns; and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of sixty-three, it is not sufficient, that the laws only be put on the same state, but, that our circumstances, likewise, be put on the same state; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged; otherwise we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request had it been complied with a year ago, would have won the heart and soul of the Continent—but now it is too late, “The Rubicon is passed.”

Besides the taking up arms, merely to enforce the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object, on either side, doth not justify the ways and means; for the lives of men are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons; the destruction of our property by an armed force; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms: And the instant, in which such a mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independency of America should have been considered, as dating its æra from, and published by, *the first musket that was fired against her*. This

line is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks, with the following timely and well intended hints. We ought to reflect, that there are three different ways by which an independency may hereafter be effected; and that *one* of those *three*, will one day or other, be the fate of America, viz. By the legal voice of the people in Congress; by a military power; or by a mob: It may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest, purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now. The birthday of a new world is at hand, and a race of men perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the event of a few months. The Reflexion is awful—and in this point of view, How trifling, how ridiculous, do the little, paltry cavellings, of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favourable and inviting period, and an independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those

rather, whose narrow and prejudiced souls, are habitually opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of Independence, which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not now to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure, and honorable basis, and uneasy rather that it is not yet begun upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. Even the Tories (if such beings yet remain among us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it; for, as the appointment of committees at first, protected them from popular rage, so, a wise and well established form of government, will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. *Wherefore*, if they have not virtue enough to be WHIGS, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for Independence.

In short, Independence is the only BOND that can tie and keep us together. We shall then see our object, and our ears will be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing, as well as a cruel enemy. We shall then too, be on a proper footing, to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court, will be less hurt by treating with the American states for terms of peace, than with those, whom she denominates, "rebellious subjects,"

for terms of accommodation. It is our delaying it that encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain redress of our grievances, let us *now* try the alternative, by *independently* redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part of England will be still with us; because, peace *with* trade, is preferable to war *without* it. And if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the former editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof, that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favour of it are too numerous to be opposed. WHEREFORE, instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us, hold out to his neighbour the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissention. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct: and let none other be heard among us, than those of *a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the RIGHTS of MANKIND and of the FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.*

To the Representatives of the Religious Society of the People called Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in publishing a late piece, entitled "The ANCIENT TESTIMONY and PRINCIPLES of the People called QUAKERS renewed, with respect to the KING and GOVERNMENT, and touching the COMMOTIONS now prevailing in these and other parts of AMERICA, addressed to the PEOPLE IN GENERAL."

THE Writer of this, is one of those few, who never dishonors religion either by ridiculing, or cavelling at any denomination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are all men accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore, this epistle is not so properly addressed to you as a religious, but as a political body, dabbling in matters, which the professed Quietude of your Principles instruct you not to meddle with.

As you have, without a proper authority for so doing, put yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Quakers, so, the writer of this, in order to be on an equal rank with yourselves, is under the necessity, of putting himself in the place of all those who approve the very writings and principles, against which your testimony is directed: And he hath chosen their singular situation, in order that you might discover in him, that presumption of character which you cannot see in yourselves. For neither he nor you have any claim or title to *Political Representation*.

When men have departed from the right way, it is no wonder that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from the manner in which ye have managed your testimony, that politics, (as a religious body of men) is not your proper Walk; for however well adapted it might appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good

and bad put unwisely together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom, both unnatural and unjust.

The two first pages, (and the whole doth not make four) we give you credit for, and expect the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the *natural*, as well as the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men labouring to establish an Independent Constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end, and aim. *Our plan is peace for ever.* We are tired of contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in a final separation. We act consistently, because for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and burthens of the present day. We are endeavouring, and will steadily continue to endeavour, to separate and dissolve a connexion which hath already filled our land with blood; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest; neither from pride nor passion; we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines are we attacked; in our own houses, and on our own lands, is the violence

committed against us. We view our enemies in the characters of Highwaymen and Housebreakers, and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply the sword, in the very case, where you have before now, applied the halter. — Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that ye mistake not the cause and ground of your Testimony. Call not coldness of soul, religion; nor put the *Bigot* in the place of the *Christian*.

O ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles. If the bearing arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between wilful attack and unavoidable defence. Wherefore if ye really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof, by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, for they likewise bear ARMS. Give us proof of your sincerity by publishing it at St. James's, to the commanders in chief at Boston, to the Admirals and Captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering mis-

creants who are acting in authority under HIM whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of * *Barclay* ye would preach repentance to your king; Ye would tell the Royal — his sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and the insulted only, but like faithful ministers, would cry aloud and spare none. Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavour to make us the authors of that reproach, which, ye are bringing upon yourselves; for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against you because ye are *Quakers*, but because ye pretend to be and are NOT Quakers.

Alas! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in the act of bearing arms, and that by the people only. Ye appear to us, to have mistaken party for conscience; because the general tenor of your actions wants uniformity: and it is exceedingly difficult to us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples; because we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless, hunting after it with a step as steady as

* “Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity; thou knowest what it is to be banished. thy native country, to be over-ruled as well as to rule, and set upon the throne; and being oppressed thou hast reason to know how hateful the oppressor is both to God and man: If after all these warnings and advertisements, thou dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, but forget him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely great will be thy condemnation.—Against which snare, as well as the temptation of those who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most excellent and prevalent remedy will be, to apply thyself to that light of Christ which shineth in thy conscience and which neither can, nor will flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins.”

Barclay's Address to Charles II.

Time, and an appetite as keen as Death.

The quotation which ye have made from Proverbs, in the third page of your testimony, that, "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;" is very unwisely chosen on your part; because it amounts to a proof, that the king's ways (whom ye are so desirous of supporting) do *not* please the Lord, otherwise, his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your testimony, and that, for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, viz.

"It hath ever been our judgment
"and principle, since we were called
"to profess the light of Christ Jesus,
"manifested in our consciences unto
"this day, that the setting up and
"putting down kings and govern-
"ments, is God's peculiar preroga-
"tive; for causes best known to
"himself: And that it is not our
"business to have any hand or con-
"trivance therein; nor to be busy
"bodies above our station, much
"less to plot and contrive the ruin,
"or overturn any of them, but to
"pray for the king, and safety of
"our nation, and good of all men:
"That we may live a peaceable
"and quiet life, in all goodliness
"and honesty; *under the govern-
"ment which God is pleased to set
"over us.*"—If these are *really*
your principles why do ye not abide
by them? Why do ye not leave that,
which ye call God's Work, to be ma-
naged by himself? These very prin-
ciples instruct you to wait with pati-
ence and humility, for the event of
all public measures, and to receive
that event as the divine will towards

you. *Wherefore*, what occasion is there for your *political testimony* if you fully believe what it contains? And the very publishing it proves, that either, ye do not believe what ye profess or have not virtue enough to practise what ye believe.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any, and every government *which is set over him*. And if the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God's peculiar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof by us; wherefore, the principle itself leads you to approve of every thing, which ever happened, or may happen to kings as being his work. OLIVER CROMWELL thanks you.—CHARLES, then, died not by the hands of man; and should the present Proud Imitator of him come to the same untimely end, the writers and publishers of the testimony, are bound by the doctrine it contains, to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human; and such as we are now using. Even the dispersing of the Jews, though foretold by our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye refuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to be meddlers on the other; but to wait the issue in silence; and unless you can produce divine authority, to prove, that the Almighty who hath created and placed this *new* world, at the greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, from every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove of its being independent of the corrupt and aban-

done court of B——n; unless, I say, ye can show this, how can ye, on the ground of your principles, justify the exciting and stirring up the people “firmly to unite in the *abhorrence* of all such *writings*, and *measures*, as evince a desire and design to break off the *happy* connexion we have hitherto enjoyed, with the kingdom of Great-Britain, and our just and necessary subordination to the king, and those who are lawfully placed in authority under him.” What a slap in the face is here! the men, who, in the very paragraph before, have quietly and passively resigned up the ordering, altering and disposal of kings and governments, into the hands of God, are now recalling their principles, and putting in for a share of the business. Is it possible, that the conclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways follow from the doctrine laid down? The inconsistency is too glaring not to be seen; the absurdity too great not to be laughed at; and such as could only have been made by those, whose understandings were darkened by the narrow and crabby spirit of a despairing political party; for ye are not to be considered as the whole body of the Quakers, but only as a factional and fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your testimony; (which I call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to read and judge of fairly) to which I subjoin the following remark; “That the setting up and putting down of kings,” must certainly

mean, the making him a king, who is yet not so, and the making him no king who is already one. And pray what hath this to do in the present case? We neither mean to *set up* nor to *put down*, neither to *make* nor to *unmake*, but to have nothing to do with them. Wherefore your testimony in whatever light it is viewed serves only to dishonour your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been let alone than published.

First. Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

Secondly. Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing political testimonies, as being concerned therein and approvers thereof.

Thirdly. Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves by your late liberal and charitable donations hath lent a hand to establish; and the preservation of which, is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here without anger or resentment I bid you farewell. Sincerely wishing, that as men and christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right; and be, in your turn, the means of securing it to others; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of AMERICA.*

INTRODUCTION.

A LONDON translation of an original work in French, by the Abbe Raynal, which treats of the Revolution of North-America, having been re-printed in Philadelphia and other parts of the continent, and as the distance at which the Abbe is placed from the American theatre of war and politics, has occasioned him to mistake several facts, or, misconceive the causes or principles by which they were produced; the following tract, therefore, is published with a view to rectify them, and prevent even accidental errors intermixing with history, under the sanction of time and silence.

The editor of the London edition has entitled it, "*The Revolution of America*, by the ABBE RAYNAL," and the American printers have followed the example. But I have understood, and I believe my information just, that the piece, which is more properly reflections on the revolution, was unfairly purloined from the printer which the Abbe employed, or from the manuscript copy, and is only part of a larger work then in the press, or preparing for it. The person who procured it appears to have been an Englishman, and though in an advertisement prefixed to the London edition, he has endeavoured to gloss over the embezzlement with professions of patriotism, and to soften it with high encomiums on the author, yet the action, in any view, in which it can be placed, is illiberal and unpardonable.

"In the course of his travels," says he, "the translator happily succeeded in obtaining a copy of this exquisite little piece, which has not yet made its appearance from any press. He publishes a French edition, in favour of those who will feel its eloquent reasoning more forcibly in its native language, at the same time with the following translation of it; in which he has been desirous, perhaps in vain, that all the warmth, the grace, the strength, the dignity of the original, should not be lost. And he flatters himself, that the indulgence of the illustrious historian will not be wanting to a man, who, of his own motion, has taken the liberty to give this composition to the public, only from a strong persuasion, that its momentous argument will be useful, in a critical conjuncture, to that country which he loves with an ardour, that can be exceeded

“ only by the nobler flame, which burns in the bosom of the philanthropic author, for the freedom and happiness of all the countries upon earth.”

This plausibility of setting off a dishonourable action, may pass for patriotism and sound principles with those who do not enter into its demerits, and whose interest is not injured nor their happiness affected thereby. But it is more than probable, notwithstanding the declarations it contains, that the copy was obtained for the sake of profiting by the sale of a new and popular work, and that the professions are but a garb to the fraud.

It may with propriety be remarked, that in all countries where literature is protected, and it never can flourish where it is not, the works of an author are his legal property; and to treat letters in any other light than this, is to banish them from the country or strangle them in the birth.—The embezzlement from the Abbe Raynal, was, it is true, committed by one country upon another, and therefore shews no defect in the laws of either. But it is nevertheless a breach of civil manners and literary justice; neither can it be any apology, that because the countries are at war, literature shall be entitled to depredation.*

But the forestalling the Abbe's publication by London editions, both in French and English, and thereby not only defrauding him and throwing an expensive publication on his hands by anticipating the sale, are only the smaller injuries which such conduct may occasion. A man's opinions, whether written or in thought, are his own until he pleases to publish them himself; and it is adding cruelty to injustice, to make him the author of what future reflection, or better information might occasion him to suppress or amend. There are declarations and sentiments in the Abbe's piece, which, for my own part, I did not expect to find, and such as himself, on a revival, might have seen occasion to change; but the anticipated piracy effectually prevented him the opportunity, and precipitated him into

* The state of literature in America must one day become a subject of legislative consideration. Hitherto it hath been a disinterested volunteer in the service of the revolution, and no man thought of profits; but when peace shall give time and opportunity for study, the country will deprive itself of the honour and service of letters and the improvement of science, unless sufficient laws are made to prevent depredations on literary property.—It is well worth remarking, that Russia, who but a few years ago, was scarcely known in Europe, owes a large share of her present greatness to the close attention she has paid, and the wise encouragement she has given, to every branch of science and learning; and we have almost the same instance in France, in the reign of Lewis XIV.

difficulties, which, had it not been for such ungenerous fraud, might not have happened.

This mode of making an author appear before his time, will appear still more ungenerous, when we consider how exceedingly few men there are in any country, who can at once, and without the aid of reflection and revival, combine warm passions with a cool temper, and the full expansion of imagination with the natural and necessary gravity of judgment, so as to be rightly balanced within themselves, and to make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly at the same time. To call three powers of the mind into action at once, in a manner that neither shall interrupt, and that each shall aid and vigo-rate the other, is a talent very rarely possessed.

It often happens that the weight of an argument is lost by the wit of setting it off; or the judgment disordered by an intemperate irritation of the passions: yet a certain degree of animation must be felt by the writer, and raised in the reader, in order to interest the attention; and a sufficient scope given to the imagination, to enable it to create in the mind a sight of the persons, characters and circumstances of the subject; for without these the judgment will feel little or no excitement to office, and its determinations will be cold, sluggish, and imperfect. But if either or both of the two former are raised too high, or heated too much, the judgment will be jostled from its seat, and the whole matter, however important in itself, will diminish into a pantomime of the mind, in which we create images that promote no other purpose than amusement.

The Abbe's writings bear evident marks of that extension and rapidness of thinking, and quickness of sensation which of all others require revival, and the more particularly so, when applied to the living characters of nations or individuals in a state of war. The least misinformation or misconception leads to some wrong conclusion, and an error believed becomes the progenitor of others.—And as the Abbe has suffered some inconveniencies in France, by mistating certain circumstances of the war, and the characters of the parties therein, it becomes some apology for him, that those errors were precipitated into the world by the avarice of an ungenerous enemy.

P A I N E ' S W O R K S .

L E T T E R

ADDRESSED TO THE

A B B E R A Y N A L,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF

N O R T H - A M E R I C A .

TO an author of such distinguished reputation as the Abbe Raynal, it might very well become me to apologize for the present undertaking; but as *to be right* is the first wish of philosophy, and the first principle of history, he will, I presume, accept from me a declaration of my motives, which are those of doing justice, in preference to any complimentary apology, I might otherwise make.—The Abbe, in the course of his work, has, in some instances, extolled without a reason, and wounded without a cause. He has given fame where it was not deserved, and withheld it where it was justly due; and appears to be so frequently in and out of temper with his subjects and parties, that few or none of them are decisively and uniformly marked.

It is yet too soon to write the history of the revolution, and whoever attempts it precipitately, will unavoidably mistake characters and cir-

cumstances, and involve himself in error and difficulty. Things like men are seldom understood rightly at first sight. But the Abbe is wrong even in the foundation of his work; that is, he has misconceived and mistated the causes which produced the rupture between England and her then colonies, and which led on, step by step, unstudied and uncontrived on the part of America, to a revolution which has engaged the attention, and affected the interest, of Europe.

To prove this, I shall bring forward a passage, which, though placed towards the latter part of the Abbe's work, is more intimately connected with the beginning; and in which, speaking of the original cause of the dispute, he declares himself in the following manner—

“None,” says he, “of those energetic causes, which have produced so many revolutions upon the globe, existed in North-America. Nei-

“ ther religion nor laws had there
 “ been outraged. The blood of
 “ martyrs or patriots had not there
 “ streamed from scaffolds. Mo-
 “ rals had not there been insulted.
 “ Manners, customs, habits, no ob-
 “ ject dear to nations, had there been
 “ the sport of ridicule. Arbitrary
 “ power had not there torn any in-
 “ habitant from the arms of his fa-
 “ mily and his friends, to drag him
 “ to a dreary dungeon. Public order
 “ had not been there inverted. The
 “ principles of administration had
 “ not been changed there; and the
 “ maxims of government had there
 “ always remained the same. The
 “ whole question was reduced to the
 “ knowing whether the mother coun-
 “ try had, or had not, a right to lay,
 “ directly or indirectly, a slight tax
 “ upon the colonies.”

On this extraordinary passage, it
 may not be improper, in general
 terms, to remark, that none can feel
 like those who suffer; and that for a
 man to be a competent judge of the
 provocative, or, as the Abbe styles
 them, the energetic causes of the re-
 volution, he must have resided in
 America.

The Abbe in saying that the seve-
 ral particulars he has enumerated, did
 not exist in America, and neglecting
 to point out the particular period, in
 which he means they did not exist,
 reduces thereby his declaration to a
 nullity, by taking away all meaning
 from the passage.

They did not exist in 1763, and
 they all existed before 1776; conse-
 quently as there was a time when
 they did *not*, and another when they
did exist, the *time when* constitutes
 the essence of the fact, and not to
 give it, is to withhold the only evi-

dence, which proves the declaration
 right or wrong, and on which it must
 stand or fall. But the declaration,
 as it now appears, unaccompanied by
 time, has an effect in holding out to
 the world, that there was no real
 cause for the revolution, because it
 denies the existence of all those
 causes, which are supposed to be jus-
 tifiable, and which the Abbe styles
 energetic.

I confess myself exceedingly at a
 loss to find out the time to which the
 Abbe alludes; because, in another
 part of the work, in speaking of the
 stamp act, which was passed in 1764,
 he styles it “ *An usurpation of the
 Americans most precious and sacred
 rights.*” Consequently he here admits
 the most energetic of all causes, that
 is, *an usurpation of their most precious
 and sacred rights*, to have existed in
 America twelve years before the de-
 claration of independence, and ten
 years before the breaking out of hos-
 tilities.—The time, therefore, in
 which the paragraph is true, must be
 antecedent to the stamp act, but as
 at that time there was no revolution
 nor any idea of one, it consequently
 applies without a meaning; and as
 it cannot, on the Abbe’s own prin-
 ciple, be applied to any time *after*
 the stamp act, it is therefore a wan-
 dering solitary paragraph connected
 with nothing and at variance with
 every thing.

The stamp act, it is true, was re-
 pealed in two years after it was passed,
 but it was immediately followed by
 one of infinitely more mischievous
 magnitude, I mean the declaratory
 act, which asserted the right, as it
 was styled, of the British Parliament,
 “ *to bind America in all cases what-
 soever.*”

If then the stamp act was an usurpation of the Americans most precious and sacred rights, the declaratory act left them no right at all; and contained the full grown seeds of the most despotic government ever exercised in the world. It placed America not only in the lowest, but in the basest state of vassalage; because it demanded an unconditional submission in every thing, or as the act expresses it, *in all cases whatsoever*: And what renders this act the more offensive, is, that it appears to have been passed as an act of mercy; truly then it may be said, that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel*.

All the original charters from the Crown of England, under the faith of which, the adventurers from the old world settled in the new, were by this act displaced from their foundations; because, contrary to the nature of them, which was that of a compact, they were now made subject to repeal or alteration at the mere will of one party only. The whole condition of America was thus put into the hands of the Parliament or the Ministry, without leaving to her the least right in any case whatsoever.

There is no despotism to which this iniquitous law did not extend; and though it might have been convenient in the execution of it, to have consulted manners and habits, the principle of the act made all tyranny legal. It stooped no where. It went to every thing. It took in with it the whole life of a man, or, if I may so express it, an eternity of circumstances. It is the nature of law to require obedience, but this demanded servitude; and the condition of an American, under the operation of it, was

not that of a subject but a vassal. Tyranny has often been established *without* law, and sometimes *against* it, but the history of mankind does not produce another instance, in which it has been established *by* law. It is an audacious outrage upon civil government, and cannot be too much exposed, in order to be sufficiently detested.

Neither could it be said after this, that the legislature of that country any longer made laws for this, but that it gave out commands; for wherein differed an act of Parliament constructed on this principle, and operating in this manner, over an unrepresented people, from the orders of a military establishment?

The Parliament of England, with respect to America, was not septennial but *perpetual*. It appeared to the latter a body always in being. Its election or its expiration were to her the same as if its members succeeded by inheritance, or went out by death, or lived for ever, or were appointed to it as a matter of office. Therefore, for the people of England to have any just conception of the mind of America, respecting this extraordinary act, they must suppose all election and expiration in that country to cease for ever, and the present Parliament, its heirs, &c. to be perpetual. In this case, I ask, what would the most clamorous of them think, were an act to be passed, declaring the right of *such a Parliament* to bind *them* in all cases whatsoever? For this word *whatsoever* would go as effectually to their *Magna Charta, Bill of Rights, Trial by Juries, &c.* as it went to the charters and forms of government in America.

I am persuaded, that the Gentleman to whom I address these remarks,

will not, after the passing this act, say, "That the *principles* of administration had not been *changed* in America, and that the maxims of government had there been *always the same*." For here is, in principle, a total overthrow of the whole; and not a subversion only, but an annihilation of the foundation of liberty, and absolute domination established in its stead.

The Abbe likewise states the case exceedingly wrong and injuriously, when he says, "that *the whole* question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a *slight* tax upon the colonies."—This was *not the whole* of the question; neither was the *quantity* of the tax the object, either to the Ministry or to the Americans. It was the principle, of which the tax made but a part, and the quantity still less, that formed the ground on which America opposed.

The tax on tea, which is the tax here alluded to, was neither more or less than an experiment to establish the practice of the declaratory law upon; modelled into the more fashionable phrase of *the universal supremacy of Parliament*. For until this time, the declaratory law had lain dormant, and the framers of it had contented themselves with barely declaring an opinion.

Therefore the *whole* question with America, in the opening of the dispute, was, Shall we be bound in all that whatsoever by the British parliament, or shall we not? For submission to the tea or tax act implied an acknowledgement of the declaratory act, or, in other words, the universal supremacy of Parliament, which, as they never in-

tended to do, it was necessary they should oppose it, in its first stage of execution.

It is probable, the Abbe has been led into this mistake by perusing detached pieces in some of the American news-papers; for, in a case where all were interested, every one had a right to give his opinion; and there were many who, with the best intentions, did not chuse the best, nor indeed the true grounds, to defend their cause upon. They felt themselves right by a general impulse, without being able to separate, analyze, and arrange the parts.

I am somewhat unwilling to examine too minutely into the whole of this extraordinary passage of the Abbe, lest I should appear to treat it with severity; otherwise I could show that not a single declaration is justly founded: For instance, the reviving an obsolete act of the reign of Henry the eighth, and fitting it to the Americans, by authority of which they were to be seized and brought from America to England, and there imprisoned and tried for any supposed offences, was, in the worst sense of the words, *to tear them, by the arbitrary power of Parliament, from the arms of their families and friends, and drag them not only to dreary but distant dungeons*. Yet this act was contrived some years before the breaking out of hostilities. And again, though the blood of martyrs and patriots had not streamed on the scaffolds, it streamed in the streets, in the massacre of the inhabitants of Boston, by the British soldiery in the year 1770.

Had the Abbe said that the causes which produced the revolution in America were originally *different* from those which produced revolu-

tions in other parts of the globe, he had been right. Here the value and quality of liberty, the nature of government, and the dignity of man, were known and understood, and the attachment of the Americans to these principles produced the revolution as a natural and almost unavoidable consequence. They had no particular family to set up or pull down. Nothing of personality was incorporated with their cause. They started even-handed with each other, and went no faster into the several stages of it, than they were driven by the unrelenting and imperious conduct of Britain. Nay, in the last act, the declaration of independence, they had nearly been too late; for had it not been declared at the exact time it was, I see no period in their affairs since, in which it could have been declared with the same effect, and probably not at all.

But the object being formed before the reverse of fortune took place, that is, before the operations of the gloomy campaign of 1776, their honor, their interest, their every thing called loudly on them to maintain it; and that glow of thought and energy of heart, which even a distant prospect of independence inspires, gave confidence to their hopes and resolution to their conduct, which a state of dependence could never have reached. They looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest, and qualified the hardships of the campaign by contemplating the establishment of their new-born system.

If on the other hand, we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find every thing which ought to make a nation blush. The most vulgar abuse, accompanied by that

species of haughtiness, which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a gentleman; it was equally as much from her manners as from her injustice that she lost the colonies. By the latter she provoked their principles, by the former she wore out their temper; and it ought to be held out as an example to the world, to show, how necessary it is to conduct the business of government with civility. In short, other revolutions may have originated in caprice or generated in ambition; but here the most unoffending humility was tortured into rage, and the infancy of existence made to weep.

A union so extensive, continued and determined, suffering with patience and never in despair, could not have been produced by common causes. It must be something capable of reaching the whole soul of man and arming it with perpetual energy. In vain is it to look for precedents among the revolutions of former ages, to find out, by comparison, the causes of this. The spring, the progress, the object, the consequences, nay, the men, the habits of thinking, and all the circumstances of the country are different. Those of other nations are, in general, little more than the history of their quarrels. They are marked by no important character in the annals of events; mixt in the mass of general matters they occupy but a common page; and while the chief of the successful partizans stepped into power, the plundered multitude sat down and sorrowed. Few, very few of them are accompanied with reformation, either in government or manners; many of them with the most consummate profligacy. Triumph on the one side, and misery on

the other were the only events. Pains, punishments, torture, and death were made the business of mankind, until compassion, the fairest associate of the heart, was driven from its place, and the eye, accustomed to continual cruelty, could behold it without offence.

But as the principles of the present revolution differed from those which preceded it, so likewise has the conduct of America both in government and war. Neither the foul finger of disgrace nor the bloody hand of vengeance has hitherto put a blot upon her fame. Her victories have received lustre from a greatness of lenity; and her laws been permitted to slumber, where they might justly have awakened to punish. War, so much the trade of the world, has here been only the business of necessity; and when the necessity shall cease, her very enemies must confess, that as she drew the sword in her just defence, she used it without cruelty, and sheathed it without revenge.

As it is not my design to extend these remarks to a history, I shall now take my leave of this passage of the Abbe, with an observation, which until something unfolds itself to convince me otherwise, I cannot avoid believing to be true;—which is, that it was the fixt determination of the British cabinet to quarrel with America at all events.

They (the members who compose the cabinet) had no doubt of success, if they could once bring it to the issue of a battle; and they expected from a conquest, what they could neither propose with decency, nor hope for by negociation. The charters and constitutions of the colonies were become to them matters of of-

fence, and their rapid progress in property and population were disgustingly beheld as the growing and natural means of independence. They saw no way to retain them long but by reducing them in time. A conquest would at once have made them both lords and landlords; and put them in possession both of the revenue and the rental. The whole trouble of government would have ceased in a victory, and a final end been put to remonstrance and debate. The experience of the stamp act had taught them how to quarrel with the advantages of cover and convenience, and they had nothing to do but to renew the scene and put contention into motion. They hoped for rebellion, and they made one. They expected a declaration of independence, and they were not disappointed. But after this, they looked for victory, and they obtained a defeat.

If this be taken as the generating cause of the contest, then is every part of the conduct of the British Ministry consistent from the commencement of the dispute, until the signing the treaty of Paris, after which, conquest becoming doubtful, they retreated to negociation, and were again defeated.

Though the Abbe possesses and displays great powers of genius, and is a master of stile and language, he seems not to pay equal attention to the office of an historian. His facts are coldly and carelessly stated. They neither inform the reader nor interest him. Many of them are erroneous, and most of them defective and obscure. It is undoubtedly both an ornament and a useful addition to history to accompany it with maxims and reflections. They afford likewise

an agreeable change to the style and a more diversified manner of expression; but it is absolutely necessary that the root from whence they spring, or the foundations on which they are raised, should be well attended to, which in this work they are not. The Abbe hastens through his narrations as if he was glad to get from them, that he may enter the more copious field of eloquence and imagination.

The actions of Trenton and Princeton in New-Jersey, in December 1776, and January following, on which the fate of America stood for a while trembling on the point of suspense, and from which the most important consequences followed, are comprised within a single paragraph faintly conceived, and barren of character, circumstance, and description.

“ On the 25th of December,” says the Abbe, “ they (the Americans) crossed the Delaware, and “ fell *accidentally* upon Trenton, “ which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians, sold in so base a manner by “ their avaricious master, to the King “ of Great Britain. This corps was “ *massacred*, taken, or dispersed. “ Eight days after, three English “ regiments were in like manner “ driven from Princeton, but after “ having better supported their reputation than the foreign troops in “ their pay.”

This is all the account which is given of these most interesting events. The Abbe has preceded them by two or three pages on the military operations of both armies, from the time of General Howe arriving before New-York from Halifax, and the

vast reinforcements of British and foreign troops with Lord Howe from England. But in these, there is so much mistake, and so many omissions, that, to set them right, must be the business of history and not of a letter. The action of Long-Island is but barely hinted at; and the operation at the White Plains wholly omitted: as are likewise the attack and loss of Fort Washington, with a garrison of about two thousand five hundred men, and the precipitate evacuation of Fort Lee, in consequence thereof; which losses were in a great measure the cause of the retreat through the Jerseys to the Delaware, a distance of about ninety miles. Neither is the manner of the retreat described, which, from the season of the year, the nature of the country, the nearness of the two armies, (sometimes within sight and shot of each other for such a length of way) the rear of the one employed in pulling down bridges, and the van of the other in building them up, must necessarily be accompanied with many interesting circumstances.

It was a period of distresses. A crisis rather of danger than of hope. There is no description can do it justice; and even the actors in it, looking back upon the scene, are surprised how they got through; and at a loss to account for those powers of the mind and springs of animation, by which they withstood the force of accumulated misfortune.

It was expected, that the time for which the army was enlisted, would carry the campaign so far into the winter, that the severity of the season, and the consequent condition of the roads, would prevent any material operation of the enemy, until the

new army could be raised for the next year. And I mention it, as a matter worthy of attention, by all future historians, that the movements of the American army, until the attack upon the Hessian post at Trenton, the 26th of December, are to be considered as operating to effect no other principal purpose than delay, and to wear away the campaign under all the disadvantages of an unequal force, with as little misfortune as possible.

But the loss of the garrison at Fort Washington on the 16th of November, and the expiration of the time of a considerable part of the army, so early as the 30th of the same month, and which were to be followed by almost daily expirations afterwards, made retreat the only final expedient. To these circumstances may be added the forlorn and destitute condition of the few that remained; for the garrison of Fort Lee, which composed almost the whole of the retreat, had been obliged to abandon it so instantaneously, that every article of stores and baggage was left behind, and in this destitute condition, without tent or blanket, and without any other utensils to dress their provision, than what they procured by the way, they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address and management to prolong it to the space of nineteen days.

By this unexpected or rather unthought of turn of affairs, the country was in an instant surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without an army to oppose him. There were no succours to be had, but from the free-will offering of the inhabitants. All was choice, and every man reasoned for himself.

It was in this situation of affairs, equally calculated to confound or to inspire, that the gentleman, the merchant, the farmer, the tradesman, and the labourer mutually turned from all the conveniencies of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers, and undergo the severities of a winter campaign. The delay, so judiciously contrived on the retreat, afforded time for the volunteer reinforcements to join General Washington on the Delaware.

The Abbe is likewise wrong in saying, that the American army fell *accidentally* on Trenton. It was the very object for which General Washington crossed the Delaware in the dead of the night and in the midst of snow, storms, and ice; and which he immediately recrossed with his prisoners, as soon as he had accomplished his purpose. Neither was the intended enterprise a secret to the enemy, information having been sent of it by letter, from a British Officer at Princeton, to Colonel Rolle, who commanded the Hessians at Trenton, which letter was afterwards found by the Americans. Nevertheless the post was completely surprised. A small circumstance, which had the appearance of mistake on the part of the Americans, led to a more capital and real mistake on the part of Rolle.

The case was this. A detachment of twenty or thirty Americans had been sent across the river from a post, a few miles above, by an Officer unacquainted with the intended attack; these were met by a body of Hessians on the night, to which the information pointed, which was Christmas night, and repulsed. Nothing further appearing, and the Hessians, mistaking this for the advanced party, supposed

the enterprize disconcerted, which at that time was not began, and under this idea, returned to their quarters; so that, what might have raised an alarm, and brought the Americans into an ambuscade, served to take off the force of an information, and promote the success of the enterprize. Soon after day-light General Washington entered the town, and after a little opposition, made himself master of it, with upwards of nine hundred prisoners.

This combination of equivocal circumstances, falling within what the Abbe styles "*the wide empire of chance*," would have afforded a fine field for thought, and I wish for the sake of that elegance of reflection he is so capable of using, that he had known it.

But the action at Princeton was accompanied by a still greater embarrassment of matters, and followed by more extraordinary consequences. The Americans, by a happy stroke of generalship, in this instance, not only deranged and defeated all the plans of the British, in the intended moment of execution, but drew from their posts the enemy they were not able to drive, and obliged them to close the campaign. As the circumstance is a curiosity in war, and not well understood in Europe, I shall, as concisely as I can, relate the principal parts; they may serve to prevent future historians from error, and recover from forgetfulness a scene of magnificent fortitude.

Immediately after the surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, General Washington recrossed the Delaware, which at this place is about three quarters of a mile over, and re-assumed his former post on the Penn-

sylvania side. Trenton remained unoccupied, and the enemy were posted at Princeton, twelve miles distant, on the road towards New-York. The weather was now growing very severe, and as there were very few houses near the shore where General Washington had taken his station, the greatest part of his army remained out in the woods and fields. These, with some other circumstances, induced the recrossing the Delaware and taking possession of Trenton. It was undoubtedly a bold adventure, and carried with it the appearance of defiance, especially when we consider the panic-struck condition of the enemy on the loss of the Hessian post. But, in order to give a just idea of the affair, it is necessary I should describe the place.

Trenton is situated on a rising ground, about three quarters of a mile distant from the Delaware, on the eastern or Jersey side; and is cut into two divisions by a small creek or rivulet, sufficient to turn a mill which is on it, after which it empties itself at nearly right angles into the Delaware. The upper division which is to the north-east, contains about seventy or eighty houses, and the lower about forty or fifty. The ground on each side this creek, and on which the houses are, is likewise rising, and the two divisions present an agreeable prospect to each other, with the creek between, on which there is a small stone bridge of one arch.

Scarcely had General Washington taken post here, and before the several parties of militia, out on detachments, or on their way, could be collected, than the British, leaving behind them a strong garrison at

Princeton, marched suddenly and entered Trenton at the upper or north east quarter. A party of the Americans skirmished with the advanced party of the British, to afford time for removing the stores and baggage, and withdrawing over the bridge.

In a little time the British had possession of one half of the town, General Washington of the other, and the creek only separated the two armies. Nothing could be a more critical situation than this, and if ever the fate of America depended on the event of a day, it was now. The Delaware was filling fast with large sheets of driving ice and was impassable, so that no retreat into Pennsylvania could be effected, neither is it possible, in the face of an enemy, to pass a river of such extent. The roads were broken and rugged with frost, and the main road was occupied by the enemy.

About four o'clock a party of the British approached the bridge, with a design to gain it, but were repulsed. They made no more attempts, though the creek itself is passable any where between the bridge and the Delaware. It runs in a rugged natural made ditch, over which a person may pass with little difficulty, the stream being rapid and shallow. Evening was now coming on, and the British, believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and held themselves prepared to make the attack next morning.

But the next morning produced a scene, as elegant as it was unexpected. The British were under arms and ready to march to action, when one of their light-horse from Princeton

came furiously down the street, with an account, that General Washington had that morning attacked and carried the British post at that place, and was proceeding on to seize the magazine at Brunswick; on which the British, who were then on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans, wheeled about, and in a fit of consternation marched for Princeton.

This retreat is one of those extraordinary circumstances, that in future ages may probably pass for fable. For it will with difficulty be believed, that two armies, on which such important consequences depended, should be crowded into so small a space as Trenton, and that the one, on the eve of an engagement, when every ear is supposed to be open, and every watchfulness employed, should move completely from the ground, with all its stores, baggage, and artillery, unknown and even unsuspected by the other. And so entirely were the British deceived, that when they heard the report of the cannon and small arms at Princeton, they supposed it to be thunder, though in the depth of winter.

General Washington, the better to cover and disguise his retreat from Trenton, had ordered a line of fires to be lighted up in front of his camp. These not only served to give an appearance of going to rest, and continuing that deception, but they effectually concealed from the British whatever was acting behind them, for flame can no more be seen through than a wall, and in this situation, it may with some propriety be said, they became as a pillar of fire to the one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other: after this, by a circuitous

march of eighteen miles, the Americans reached Princeton early in the morning.

The number of prisoners taken were between two and three hundred, with which General Washington immediately set off. The van of the British army from Trenton entered Princeton about an hour after the Americans had left it, who continuing their march for the remainder of the day, arrived in the evening at a convenient situation, wide of the main road to Brunswick, and about sixteen miles distant from Princeton.—But so wearied and exhausted were they, with the continual and unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter and almost without refreshment, that the bare and frozen ground, with no other covering than the sky, became to them a place of comfortable rest. By these two events, and with but little comparative force to accomplish them, the Americans closed with advantages a campaign, which, but a few days before, threatened the country with destruction. The British army, apprehensive for the safety of their magazines at Brunswick, eighteen miles distant, marched immediately for that place, where they arrived late in the evening, and from which they made no attempts to move, for nearly five months.

Having thus stated the principal outlines of these two most interesting actions, I shall now quit them, to put the Abbe right in his mistated accounts of the debt and paper money of America, wherein, speaking of these matters, he says,

“ These ideal riches were rejected.
“ The more the multiplication of

“ them was urged by want, the
“ greater did their depreciation grow.
“ The Congress was indignant at the
“ affronts given to its money, and
“ declared all those to be traitors to
“ their country who should not re-
“ ceive it as they would have receiv-
“ ed gold itself.

“ Did not this body know, that
“ prepossessions are no more to be con-
“ troled than feelings are? Did it not
“ perceive, that in the present crisis
“ every rational man would be afraid
“ of exposing his fortune? Did it
“ not see, that at the beginning of a
“ republic it permitted to itself the
“ exercise of such acts of despotism
“ as are unknown even in the coun-
“ tries which are moulded to, and
“ become familiar with, servitude
“ and oppression? Could it pretend
“ that it did not punish a want of
“ confidence with the pains which
“ would have been scarcely merited
“ by revolt and treason? Of all
“ this was the Congress well aware.
“ But it had no choice of means.
“ Its despised and despicable scraps
“ of paper were actually thirty times
“ below their original value, when
“ more of them were ordered to be
“ made. On the 13th of Septem-
“ ber, 1779, there was of this paper
“ money, amongst the public, to the
“ amount of £.35,544,155. The
“ state owed moreover £.8,385,356,
“ without reckoning the particular
“ debts of single provinces.”

In the above recited passages the Abbe speaks as if the United States had contracted a debt of upwards of forty millions pounds sterling, besides the debts of individual States. After which, speaking of foreign trade with America, he says, that “ those
“ countries in Europe, which are

“ commercial ones, knowing that
 “ North-America had been reduc-
 “ ed to contract debts at the epoch
 “ of even her greatest prosperity,
 “ wisely thought, that, in her pre-
 “ sent distress, she would be able to
 “ pay but very little, for what might
 “ be carried to her.”

I know it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumstances of our paper money, because there are natives, who do not understand it themselves. But with us its fate is now determined. Common consent has consigned it to rest with that kind of regard, which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone, in the bridge, that has carried us over, seems to have a claim upon our esteem. But this was a corner stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. There is something in a grateful mind, which extends itself even to things that can neither be benefited by regard, nor suffer by neglect;— But so it is; and almost every man is sensible of the effect.

But to return. The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year, were equal to gold and silver. The second year less, the third still less, and so on, for nearly the space of five years; at the end of which, I imagine, that the whole value, at which Congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve millions pounds sterling.

Now as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes, to carry on the war for five years, and, as while this money was issuing and likewise depreciating down to no-

thing, there were none, or few valuable taxes paid, consequently the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money, by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for as they did not do both, and chose to do one, the matter, in a general view, was indifferent. And therefore, what the Abbe supposes to be a debt, has now no existence; it having been paid, by every body consenting, to reduce at his own expence, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum, equal to nearly what the expence of the war was for five years.

Again. The paper money having now ceased, and the depreciation with it, and gold and silver supplied its place, the war will now be carried on by taxation, which will draw from the public a considerable less sum than what the depreciation drew; but as while they pay the former, they do not suffer the latter, and as when they suffered the latter, they did not pay the former, the thing will be nearly equal, with this moral advantage, that taxation occasions frugality and thought, and depreciation produced dissipation and carelessness.

And again. If a man's proportion of taxes comes to less than what he lost by the depreciation, it proves the alteration in his favor. If it comes to more, and he is justly assessed, it shews that he did not sustain his proper share of depreciation, because the one was as operatively his tax as the other.

It is true, that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen, that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner; but as by the voluntary conduct of all and of every one it has arrived

at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it. Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent, for such was the effect, which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him when the war is over, to make that money good in any other persons hands, which became nothing in his own.

Again. The paper currency was issued for the express purpose of carrying on the war. It has performed that service, without any other material charge to the public, while it lasted. But to suppose, as some did, that, at the end of the war, it was to grow into gold or silver, or become equal thereto, was to suppose that we were to get two hundred millions of dollars by going to war, instead of paying the cost of carrying it on.

But if any thing in the situation of America, as to her currency or her circumstances, yet remains not understood, then let it be remembered, that this war is the public's war; the people's war; the country's war. It is *their* independence that is to be supported; *their* property that is to be secured; *their* country that is to be saved. Here, government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings, may lose their thrones and their dominions; but here the loss must fall on *the majesty of the multitude*, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being

sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge, as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered a monarch falls.

The remark, which the Abbe in the conclusion of the passage has made, respecting America contracting debts in the time of her prosperity (by which he means, before the breaking out of hostilities) serves to show, though he has not made the application, the very great commercial difference between a dependent and an independent country. In a state of dependence, and with a fettered commerce, though with all the advantages of peace, her trade could not balance itself, and she annually run into debt. But now, in a state of independence, though involved in war, she requires no credit; her stores are full of merchandize, and gold and silver are become the currency of the country. How these things have established themselves it is difficult to account for: But they are facts, and facts are more powerful than arguments.

As it is probable this letter will undergo a republication in Europe, the remarks here thrown together will serve to show the extreme folly of Britain, in resting her hopes of success on the extinction of our paper currency. The expectation is at once so childish and forlorn, that it places her in the laughable condition of a famished lion watching for prey at a spider's web.

From this account of the currency, the Abbe proceeds to state the condition of America in the winter 1777, and the spring following; and closes his observations with mentioning the treaty of alliance, which was signed in France, and the propositions of

the British Ministry, which were rejected in America. But in the manner in which the Abbe has arranged his facts, there is a very material error, that not only he, but other European historians have fallen into; none of them having assigned the true cause why the British proposals were rejected, and all of them have assigned a wrong one.

In the winter 1777, and spring following, Congress were assembled at York-town in Pennsylvania, the British were in possession of Philadelphia, and General Washington with the army were encamped in huts at the Valley-Forge, twenty-five miles distant therefrom. To all who can remember, it was a season of hardship but not of despair; and the Abbe, speaking of this period and its inconveniences, says,

“ A multitude of privations, added to so many other misfortunes, might make the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and incline them to an accommodation with England. In vain had the people been bound to the new government by the sacredness of oaths and the influence of religion. In vain had endeavours been used to convince them, that it was impossible to treat safely with a country in which one parliament might overturn what should have been established by another. In vain had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an exasperated and vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant troubles might not be balanced by the weight of present evils.

“ So thought the British ministry when they sent to the New World public agents, authorized to offer

“ every thing except independence to these very Americans, from whom they had two years before exacted an unconditional submission. It is not improbable, but that by this plan of conciliation, a few months sooner, some effect might have been produced. But at the period at which it was proposed by the Court of London, it was rejected with disdain, because this measure appeared but as an argument of fear and weakness. The people were already re-assured. The Congress, the Generals, the troops, the bold and skilful men, in each colony had possessed themselves of the authority; every thing had recovered its first spirit. *This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the Court of Versailles, signed the 6th of February 1778.*

On this passage of the Abbe's I cannot help remarking, that, to unite time with circumstance, is a material nicety in history; the want of which frequently throws it into endless confusion and mistake, occasions a total separation between causes and consequences, and connects them with others they are not immediately, and sometimes not at all, related to.

The Abbe, in saying that the offers of the British Ministry “ were rejected with disdain,” is *right*, as to the *fact*, but *wrong* as to the *time*; and this error in the time has occasioned him to be mistaken in the cause.

The signing the treaty of Paris the 6th of February, 1778, could have no effect on the mind or politics of America until it was *known in America*; and therefore, when the Abbe says, that, the rejection of the

British offers was in consequence of the alliance, he must mean, that it was in consequence of the alliance *being known* in America; which was not the case: And by this mistake he not only takes from her the reputation, which her unshaken fortitude in that trying situation deserves, but is likewise led very injuriously to suppose, that had she *not known* of the treaty, the offers would probably have been accepted; whereas she knew nothing of the treaty at the time of the rejection, and consequently did not reject them on that ground.

The propositions or offers above mentioned were contained in two bills brought into the British Parliament by Lord North on the 17th of February, 1778. Those bills were hurried through both Houses with unusual haste, and before they had gone through all the customary forms of Parliament, copies of them were sent over to Lord Howe and General Howe, then in Philadelphia, who were likewise Commissioners. General Howe ordered them to be printed in Philadelphia, and sent copies of them by a flag to General Washington, to be forwarded to Congress at York-Town, where they arrived the 21st of April, 1778. Thus much for the arrival of the bills in America.

Congress, as in their usual mode, appointed a committee from their own body, to examine them and report thereon. The report was brought in the next day (the twenty-second) was read, and unanimously agreed to, entered on their journals, and published for the information of the country. Now this report must be the rejection to which the Abbe alludes, because Congress gave no

other formal opinion on those bills and propositions. And on a subsequent application from the British Commissioners, dated the 27th of May, and received at York-Town the 6th of June, Congress immediately referred them for an answer to their printed resolves of the 22d of April. Thus much for the rejection of the offers.

On the 2d of May, that is, eleven days after the above rejection was made, the treaty between the United States and France arrived at York-Town; and until this moment Congress had not the least notice or idea, that such a measure was in any train of execution. But lest this declaration of mine should pass only for assertion, I shall support it by proof, for it is material to the character and principle of the revolution to show, that no condition of America, since the declaration of independence, however trying and severe, ever operated to produce the most distant idea of yielding it up either by force, distress, artifice or persuasion. And this proof is the more necessary, because it was the system of the British Ministry at this time, as well as before and since, to hold out to the European powers that America was unfixed in her resolutions and policy; hoping by this artifice to lessen her reputation in Europe, and weaken the confidence which those powers, or any of them, might be inclined to place in her.

At the time these matters were transacting, I was secretary in the foreign department of Congress. All the *political* letters from the American Commissioners rested in my hands, and all that were officially written went from my office; and so far

from Congress knowing any thing of the signing the treaty, at the time they rejected the British offers, they had not received a line of information from their Commissioners at Paris on any subject whatever for upwards of a twelvemonth. Probably the loss of the port of Philadelphia and the navigation of the Delaware, together with the danger of the seas, covered at this time with British cruizers, contributed to the disappointment.

One packet, it is true, arrived at York-Town in January preceding, which was about three months before the arrival of the treaty; but, strange as it may appear, every letter had been taken out, before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank white paper put in their stead.

Having thus stated the time when the proposals from the British Commissioners were first received, and likewise the time when the treaty of alliance arrived, and shewn that the rejection of the former was eleven days prior to the arrival of the latter, and without the least knowledge of such circumstance having taken place or being about to take place; the rejection, therefore, must, and ought to be attributed to the fixt unvaried sentiments of America respecting the enemy she is at war with, and her determination to support her independence to the last possible effort, and not to any new circumstance in her favour, which at that time she did not and could not know of.

Besides, there is a vigour of determination and spirit of defiance in the language of the rejection, (which

I here subjoin) which derive their greatest glory by appearing before the treaty was known; for that, which is bravery in distress becomes insult in prosperity: And the treaty placed America on such a strong foundation, that had she then known it, the answer which she gave, would have appeared rather as an air of triumph, than as the glowing serenity of fortitude.

Upon the whole, the Abbe appears to have entirely mistaken the matter; for instead of attributing the rejection of the propositions to *our knowledge* of the treaty of alliance; he should have attributed the origin of them to the British cabinet, to *their knowledge* of that event. And then the reason why they were hurried over to America in the state of bills, that is, before they were passed into acts, is easily accounted for, which is, that they might have the chance of reaching America before any knowledge of the treaty should arrive, which they were lucky enough to do, and there met the fate they so richly merited. That these bills were brought into the British Parliament after the treaty with France was signed, is proved from the dates: The treaty being on the 6th, and the bills the 17th of February. And that the signing the treaty was known in Parliament, when the bills were brought in, is likewise proved by a speech of Mr. Charles Fox, on the said 17th of February, who, in reply to Lord North, informed the House of the treaty being signed, and challenged the Minister's knowledge of the same fact.*)

*) IN CONGRESS, April 22d, 1778.

" THE Committee, to whom was referred the General's letter of the 18th, containing a certain printed paper sent from Philadelphia, purporting to be the draught of

Though I am not surpris'd to see tory, acted at so great a distance from the Abbe mistaken in matters of his sphere of immediate observation,

of a Bill for declaring the *intentions* of the Parliament of Great Britain, as to the *exercise* of what they are pleas'd to term their *right* of imposing taxes within these United States; and also the draught of a Bill to enable the King of Great Britain to appoint Commissioners, with powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the said States, beg leave to observe,

“ That the said paper being industriously circulated by emissaries of the enemy, in a partial and secret manner, the same ought to be forthwith printed for the public information.

“ The Committee cannot ascertain whether the contents of the said paper have been framed in Philadelphia or in Great Britain, much less whether the same are really and truly intended to be brought into the Parliament of that kingdom, or whether the said Parliament will confer thereon the usual solemnities of their laws. But are inclin'd to believe this will happen, for the following reasons :

“ 1st. Because their General hath made divers feeble efforts to set on foot some kind of treaty during the last winter, though either from a mistaken idea of his own dignity and importance, the want of information, or some other cause, he hath not made application to those who are invest'd with a proper authority.

“ 2dly. Because they suppose that the fallacious idea of a cessation of hostilities will render these States remiss in their preparations for war.

“ 3dly. Because believing the Americans wearied with war, they suppose we will accede to their terms for the sake of peace.

“ 4thly. Because they suppose that our negotiations may be subject to a like corrupt influence with their debates.

“ 5thly. Because they expect from this step the same effects they did from what one of their ministers thought proper to call his *conciliatory motion*, viz. that it will prevent foreign powers from giving aid to these States : that it will lead their own subjects to continue a little longer the present war ; and that it will detach some weak men in America from the cause of freedom and virtue.

“ 6thly. Because their King, from his own shewing, hath reason to apprehend that his fleets and armies, instead of being employed against the territories of these States, will be necessary for the defence of his own dominions. And

“ 7thly. Because the impracticability of subjugating this country being every day more and more manifest, it is their interest to extricate themselves from the war upon any terms.

“ The Committee beg leave further to observe, That, upon a supposition the matters contained in the said paper will really go into the British Statute Book, they serve to shew, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy.

“ THEIR WEAKNESS,

“ 1st. Because they formerly declared, not only that they had a right to bind the inhabitants of these States in all cases whatsoever, but also that the said inhabitants should *absolutely* and *unconditionally* submit to the exercise of that right. And this submission they have endeavour'd to exact by the sword. Receding from this claim, therefore, under the present circumstances, shews their inability to enforce it.

“ 2dly. Because their Prince hath heretofore rejected the humblest petitions of the Representatives of America, praying to be considered as subjects, and protected in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety ; and hath waged a most cruel war against them, and employed the savages to butcher innocent women and children. But now the same Prince pretends to treat with those very Representatives, and grant to the *arms* of America what he refused to her *prayers*.

“ 3dly. Because they have uniformly labour'd to conquer this continent, rejecting every idea of accommodation propos'd to them, from a confidence in their own strength. Wherefore it is evident, from the change in their mode of attack, that they have lost this confidence. And

“ 4thly. Because the constant language, spoken not only by their Ministers, but by the most public and authentic acts of the nation, hath been, that it is incompatible with

yet I am more than surpris'd to find so to me) in the well enlightened field him wrong, (or at least what appears of philosophical reflexion. Here the

with their dignity to treat with the Americans while they have arms in their hands. Notwithstanding which, an offer is now about to be made for treaty.

“ The WICKEDNESS and INSINCERITY of the enemy appear from the following considerations :

“ 1st. Either the *Bills* now to be pass'd contain a direct or indirect cession of a part of their former claims, or they do not. If they do, then it is acknowledged that they have sacrificed many brave men in an unjust quarrel. If they do not, then they are calculated to deceive America into terms, to which neither arguments before the war, nor force since, could procure her assent.

2dly. The first of these *Bills* appears from the title, to be a declaration of the *intentions* of the British Parliament concerning the exercise of the *right of imposing taxes* within these States. Wherefore, should these States treat under the said Bill, they would *indirectly* acknowledge that right, to obtain which acknowledgment the present war hath been avowedly undertaken and prosecuted on the part of Great Britain.

3dly Should such pretended right be so acquiesced in, then of consequence, the same might be exercised whenever the British Parliament should find themselves in a different *temper* and *disposition*; since it must depend upon those, and such like contingencies, how far men will act according to their former *intentions*.

“ 4thly. The said first Bill, in the Body thereof, containeth no new matter, but is precisely the same with the motion before-mentioned, and liable to all the objections which lay against the said motion, excepting the following particular, viz. that *by the motion* actual taxation was to be suspended, so long as America should give as much as the said Parliament might think proper: Whereas *by the proposed Bill*, it is to be suspended, as long as future Parliaments continue of the same mind with the present.

“ 5thly. From the second Bill it appears, that the British King may, if he pleases, appoint Commissioners to *treat* and *agree* with those, whom they please, about a variety of things therein mentioned. But such treaties and agreements are to be of no validity without the concurrence of the said Parliament, except so far as they relate to the *suspension* of hostilities, and of certain of their acts, the granting of pardons, and the appointing of Governors to these sovereign, free and independent States. Wherefore, the said Parliament have reserved to themselves, in *express words*, the power of setting aside any such treaty, and taking the advantage of any circumstances which may arise to subject this continent to their usurpations.

“ 6thly. The said Bill, by holding forth a tender of pardon, implies a criminality in our justifiable resistance, and consequently, to treat under it would be an implied acknowledgment, that the inhabitants of these States were, what Britain has declared them to be, *Rebels*.

“ 7thly. The inhabitants of these States being claimed by them as subjects, they may infer, from the nature of the negotiation now pretended to be set on foot, that the said inhabitants would of right be afterwards bound by such laws as they should make. Wherefore any agreement entered into on such negotiation might at any future time be repealed. And

“ 8thly. Because the said Bill purports, that the Commissioners therein mentioned may treat with private individuals; a measure highly derogatory to the dignity of national character.

“ From all which it appears evident to your Committee, that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these States, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now by the blessing of Divine Providence drawing near to a favourable issue. That they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which from the days of the Stamp-act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed. And that, as in other cases so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt but they will as heretofore, upon the first favourable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain the mighty empire of Britain.

“ Upon

materials are his own; created by himself; and the error, therefore, is an act of the mind.

Hitherto my remarks have been confined to circumstances; the order in which they arose, and the events they produced. In these my information being better than the Abbe's, my task was easy. How I may succeed in controverting matters of sentiment and opinion, with one whom years, experience, and long established reputation have placed in a

superior line, I am less confident in; but as they fall within the scope of my observations it would be improper to pass them over.

From this part of the Abbe's work to the latter end, I find several expressions, which appear to me to start, with a cynical complexion, from the path of liberal thinking, or at least they are so involved as to lose many of the beauties which distinguish other parts of the performance.

The following is the answer of Congress to the second application of the Commissioners:

SIR,
I HAVE had the honor of laying your letter of the 3d inst. with the acts of the British Parliament which came inclosed, before Congress; and I am instructed to acquaint you, Sir, that they have already expressed their sentiments upon bills, not essentially different from those acts, in a publication of the 22d of April last.

“Be assured, Sir, when the King

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

His Excellency,

Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. Philad.

York Town, June 6, 1778.

of Great Britain shall be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against these United States, Congress will readily attend to such terms of peace, as may consist with the honor of independent nations, the interest of their constituents, and the sacred regard they mean to pay to treaties. I have the honor to be, Sir,

HENRY LAURENS,

President of Congress.”

“Upon the whole matter, the Committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, That as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore any man or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with Commissioners under the crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of these united States.

“And further your Committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, That these united States cannot, with propriety, hold any conference or treaty with any Commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said States.

“And inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the enemies of these States to lull them into a fatal security—to the end that they may act with a becoming weight and importance, it is the opinion of your Committee, That the several States be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said States be held in readiness to act as occasion may require.”

The Abbe having brought his work to the period when the treaty of alliance between France and the United States commenced, proceeds to make some remarks thereon.

“ In short,” says he, “ philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire to see all governments just and all people happy, in casting her eyes upon this alliance of a monarchy, with a people who are defending their liberty, *is curious to know its motive. She sees, at once, too clearly, that the happiness of mankind has no part in it.*”

Whatever train of thinking or of temper the Abbe might be in, when he penned this expression, matters not. They will neither qualify the sentiment, nor add to its defect. If right, it needs no apology; if wrong, it merits no excuse. It is sent into the world as an opinion of philosophy, and may be examined without regard to the author.

It seems to be a defect, connected with ingenuity, that it often employs itself more in matters of curiosity, than usefulness. Man must be the privy counsellor of fate, or something is not right. He must know the springs, the whys and wherefores of every thing, or he sits down unsatisfied. Whether this be a crime, or only a caprice of humanity, I am not enquiring into. I shall take the passage as I find it, and place my objections against it.

It is not so properly the *motives* which *produced* the alliance, as the *consequences* which are to be *produced from it*, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection. In the one we only penetrate into the barren cave of secrecy, where little can be known, and every thing may be mis-

conceived; in the other, the mind is presented with a wide extended prospect of vegetative good, and sees a thousand blessings budding into existence.

But the expression, even within the compass of the Abbe's meaning, sets out with an error, because it is made to declare that, which no man has authority to declare. Who can say that the happiness of mankind made *no part of the motives* which produced the alliance? To be able to declare this, a man must be possessed of the mind of all the parties concerned, and know that their motives were something else.

In proportion as the independence of America became contemplated and understood, the local advantages of it to the immediate actors, and the numerous benefits it promised to mankind, appeared to be every day increasing; and we saw not a temporary good for the present race only, but a continued good to all posterity; these motives, therefore, added to those which preceded them, became the motives on the part of America, which led her to propose and agree to the treaty of alliance, as the best effectual method of extending and securing happiness; and therefore, with respect to us, the Abbe is wrong.

France, on the other hand, was situated very differently to America. She was not acted upon by necessity to seek a friend, and therefore her motive in becoming one, has the strongest evidence of being good, and that which is so, must have some happiness for its object. With regard to herself, she saw a train of conveniences worthy her attention. By lessening the power of an enemy, whom, at the same time, she sought

neither to destroy nor distress, she gained an advantage without doing an evil, and created to herself a new friend by associating with a country in misfortune. The springs of thought that lead to actions of this kind, however political they may be, are nevertheless naturally beneficent; for in all causes, good or bad, it is necessary there should be a fitness in the mind, to enable it to act in character with the object: Therefore as a bad cause cannot be prosecuted with a good motive, so neither can a good cause be long supported by a bad one, and as no man acts without a motive, therefore in the present instance, as they cannot be bad, they must be admitted to be good. But the Abbe sets out upon such an extended scale, that he overlooks the degrees by which it is measured, and rejects the beginning of good, because the end comes not at once.

It is true that bad motives may in some degree be brought to support a good cause or prosecute a good object; but it never continues long, which is not the case with France; for either the object will reform the mind, or the mind corrupt the object, or else not being able, either way, to get into unison, they will separate in disgust: And this natural, though unperceived progress of association or contention between the mind and the object, is the secret cause of fidelity or defection. Every object a man pursues, is, for the time, a kind of mistress to his mind: if both are good or bad, the union is natural; but if they are in reverse, and neither can seduce nor yet reform the other, the opposition grows into dislike and a separation follows.

When the cause of America first made her appearance on the stage of the universe, there were many, who, in the stile of adventurers and fortune-hunters, were dangling in her train, and making their court to her with every profession of honour and attachment. They were loud in her praise and ostentatious in her service. Every place echoed with their ardour or their anger, and they seemed like men in love. But, alas, they were fortune-hunters. Their expectations were excited, but their minds were unimpressed; and finding her not to their purpose, nor themselves reformed by her influence, they ceased their suit, and in some instances deserted and betrayed her.

There were others, who at first beheld her with indifference, and unacquainted with her character were cautious of her company. They treated her as one, who, under the fair name of liberty, might conceal the hideous figure of anarchy, or the gloomy monster of tyranny. They knew not what she was. If fair, she was fair indeed. But still she was suspected, and though born among us appeared to be a stranger.

Accident with some, and curiosity with others, brought on a distant acquaintance. They ventured to look at her. They felt an inclination to speak to her. One intimacy led to another, till the suspicion wore away and a change of sentiment stole gradually upon the mind; and having no self-interest to serve, no passion of dishonour to gratify, they became enamoured of her innocence, and unaltered by misfortune or uninflamed by success, shared with fidelity in the varieties of her fate.

This declaration of the Abbe's respecting motives, has led me unintendedly into a train of metaphysical reasoning; but there was no other avenue by which it could so properly be approached. To place presumption against presumption, assertion against assertion, is a mode of opposition that has no effect; and therefore the more eligible method was, to shew that the declaration does not correspond with the natural progress of the mind and the influence it has upon our conduct.—I shall now quit this part, and proceed to what I have before stated, namely, that it is not so properly the motives which produced the alliance, as the consequences to be produced from it, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection.

It is an observation I have already made in some former publication, that the circle of civilization is yet incomplete. A mutuality of wants have formed the individuals of each country into a kind of national society; and here the progress of civilization has stopt. For it is easy to see, that nations with regard to each other (notwithstanding the ideal civil law which every one explains as it suits him) are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixt principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does independently what it pleases, or what it can.

Were it possible we could have known the world when in a state of barbarism, we might have concluded, that it never could be brought into the order we now see it. The untamed mind was then as hard, if not harder, to work upon in its individual state, than the national mind is

in its present one. Yet we have seen the accomplishment of the one, why then should we doubt that of the other?

There is a greater fitness in mankind to extend and complete the civilization of nations with each other at this day, than there was to begin it with the unconnected individuals at first: in the same manner that it is somewhat easier to put together the materials of a machine after they are formed, than it was to form them from original matter. The present condition of the world differing so exceedingly from what it formerly was, has given a new cast to the mind of man, more than what he appears to be sensible of. The wants of the individual, which first produced the idea of society, are now augmented into the wants of the nation, and he is obliged to seek from another country what before he sought from the next person.

Letters, the tongue of the world, have in some measure brought all mankind acquainted, and, by an extension of their uses, are every day promoting some new friendship. Through them distant nations become capable of conversation, and losing by degrees the awkwardness of strangers, and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand each other. Science, the partisan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. Her influence on the mind, like the sun on the chilled earth, has long been preparing it for higher cultivation and further improvement. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another: He takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him.

This was not the condition of the barbarian world. Then the wants of man were few, and the objects within his reach. While he could acquire these, he lived in a state of individual independence, the consequence of which was, there were as many nations as persons, each contending with the other, to secure something which he had, or to obtain something which he had not. The world had then no business to follow, no studies to exercise the mind. Their time was divided between sloth and fatigue. Hunting and war were their chief occupations; sleep and food their principal enjoyments.

Now it is otherwise. A change in the mode of life has made it necessary to be busy; and man finds a thousand things to do now which before he did not. Instead of placing his ideas of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he studies arts, science, agriculture and commerce, the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher.

There are many things which in themselves are morally neither good nor bad, but they are productive of consequences, which are strongly marked with one or other of these characters. Thus commerce, though in itself a moral nullity, has had a considerable influence in tempering the human mind. It was the want of objects in the ancient world, which occasioned in them such a rude and perpetual turn for war. Their time hung on their hands without the means of employment. The indolence they lived in afforded leisure for mischief, and being all idle at once, and equal in their circumstances, they

were easily provoked or induced to action.

But the introduction of commerce furnished the world with objects, which in their extent reach every man, and give him something to think about, and something to do; by these his attention is mechanically drawn from the pursuits, which a state of indolence and an unemployed mind occasioned, and he trades with the same countries which former ages, tempted by their productions, and too indolent to purchase them, would have gone to war with.

Thus, as I have already observed, the condition of the world being materially changed by the influence of science and commerce, it is put into a fitness not only to admit of, but to desire an extension of civilization. The principal and almost only remaining enemy it now has to encounter, is *prejudice*; for it is evidently the interest of mankind to agree, and make the best of life. The world has undergone its divisions of empire, the several boundaries of which are known and settled. The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit. In short, the objects for war are exceedingly diminished, and there is now left scarcely any thing to quarrel about, but what arises from that demon of society, prejudice, and the consequent fullness and untractableness of the temper.

There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the

human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every where its home. It has neither taste nor choice of place, and all that it requires is room. There is scarcely a situation, except fire or water, in which a spider will not live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking, let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly characterized by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel prejudice, as the Revolution of America and the Alliance with France. Their effects are felt, and their influence already extends as well to the old world as the new. Our stile and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes, we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else, and relieved from their shackles enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful,

nor all the reasoning, however elegant, that could have produced this change, so necessary to the extension of the mind, and the cordiality of the world, without the two circumstances of the Revolution and the Alliance.

Had America dropt quietly from Britain, no material change, in sentiment, had taken place. The same notions, prejudices, and conceits, would have governed in both countries, as governed them before, and still the slaves of error and education, they would have travelled on in the beaten track of vulgar and habitual thinking. But brought about by the means it has been, both with regard to ourselves, to France, and to England, every corner of the mind is swept of its cobwebs, poison, and dust, and made fit for the reception of generous happiness.

Perhaps there never was an alliance on a broader basis, than that between America and France, and the progress of it is worth attending to. The countries had been enemies, not properly of themselves, but through the medium of England. They, originally, had no quarrel with each other, nor any cause for one, but what arose from the interest of England and her arming America against France. At the same time, the Americans at a distance from, and unacquainted with the world, and tutored in all the prejudices which governed those who governed them, conceived it their duty to act as they were taught. In doing this they expended their substance to make conquests, not for themselves but for their masters, who in return treated them as slaves.

A long succession of insolent severity, and the separation finally occasioned by the commencement of hostilities at Lexington, on the 19th of

April, 1775, naturally produced a new disposition of thinking. As the mind closed itself towards England, it opened itself towards the world, and our prejudices, like our oppressions underwent, though less observed, a mental examination; until we found the former as inconsistent with reason and benevolence, as the latter were repugnant to our civil and political rights.

While we were thus advancing by degrees into the wide field of extended humanity, the alliance with France was concluded. An alliance not formed for the mere purpose of a day, but on just and generous grounds, and with equal and mutual advantages; and the easy affectionate manner in which the parties have since communicated, has made it an alliance not of courts only but of countries. There is now an union of mind as well as of interest; and our hearts as well as our prosperity call on us to support it.

The people of England not having experienced this change, had likewise no idea of it. They were hugging to their bosoms the same prejudices we were trampling beneath our feet; and they expected to keep a hold upon America, by that narrowness of thinking, which America disdained. What they were proud of, we despised; and this is a principal cause why all their negotiations, constructed on this ground, have failed. We are now really another people, and cannot again go back to ignorance and prejudice. The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark. There is no possibility, neither is there any term to express the supposition by, of the mind, *unknowing* any thing it already knows; and therefore all at-

tempts on the part of England, fitted to the former habit of America, and on the expectation of their applying now, will be like persuading a seeing man to become blind, and a sensible one to turn an idiot. The first of which is unnatural, and the other impossible.

As to the remark which the Abbe makes of the one country being a monarchy and the other a republic, it can have no essential meaning. Forms of government have nothing to do with treaties. The former are the internal police of the countries severally; the latter, their external police jointly: and so long as each performs its part, we have no more right or business to know how the one or the other conducts its domestic affairs, than we have to enquire into the private concerns of a family.

But had the Abbe reflected for a moment, he would have seen, that courts or the governing powers of all countries, be their forms what they may, are relatively republics with each other. It is the first and true principle of allying. Antiquity may have given precedence, and power will naturally create importance, but their equal right is never disputed. It may likewise be worthy of remarking, that a monarchical country can suffer nothing in its popular happiness by allying with a republican one; and republican governments have never been destroyed by their external connections, but by some internal convulsion or contrivance. France has been in alliance with the republic of Switzerland for more than two hundred years, and still Switzerland retains her original form as entire as if she had allied with a republic like herself; therefore this remark of the Abbe goes to no-

thing.—Besides, it is best that mankind should mix. There is ever something to learn, either of manners or principle; and it is by a free communication, without regard to domestic matters, that friendship is to be extended, and prejudice destroyed all over the world.

But notwithstanding the Abbe's high professions in favour of liberty, he appears sometimes to forget himself, or that his theory is rather the child of his fancy than of his judgment: For in almost the same instant that he censures the alliance as not originally or sufficiently calculated for the happiness of mankind, he, by a figure of implication, accuses France for having acted so generously and unreservedly in concluding it. "Why did they, (says he, meaning the Court of France) tie themselves down by an inconsiderate treaty to conditions with the Congress, which they might themselves have held in dependence by ample and regular supplies."

When an author undertakes to treat of public happiness, he ought to be certain that he does not mistake passion for right, nor imagination for principle. Principle, like truth, needs no contrivance. It will ever tell its own tale, and tell it the same way. But where this is not the case, every page must be watched, recollected, and compared, like an invented story.

I am surprised at this passage of the Abbe. It means nothing or it means ill; and in any case it shews the great difference between speculative and practical knowledge. A treaty according to the Abbe's language would have neither duration nor affection; it might have lasted to the

end of the war, and then expired with it.—But France, by acting in a stile superior to the little politics of narrow thinking, has established a generous fame and won the love of a country she was before a stranger to. She had to treat with a people who thought as nature taught them; and, on her own part, she wisely saw, there was no present advantage to be obtained by unequal terms, which could balance the more lasting ones that might flow from a kind and generous beginning.

From this part the Abbe advances into the secret transactions of the two Cabinets of Versailles and Madrid respecting the independence of America; through which I mean not to follow him. It is a circumstance sufficiently striking without being commented on, that the former union of America with Britain produced a power which in her hands, was becoming dangerous to the world: And there is no improbability in supposing, that had the latter known as much of the strength of the former, before she began the quarrel as she has known since, that instead of attempting to reduce her to unconditional submission, she would have proposed to her the conquest of Mexico. But from the countries separately Spain has nothing to apprehend, though from their union she had more to fear than any other power in Europe.

The part which I shall more particularly confine myself to, is that wherein the Abbe takes an opportunity of complimenting the British Ministry with high encomiums of admiration, on their rejecting the offered mediation of the court of Madrid, in 1779.

It must be remembered that before Spain joined France in the war, she

undertook the office of a mediator and made proposals to the British King and Ministry so exceedingly favourable to their interest, that had they been accepted, would have become inconvenient, if not inadmissible, to America. These proposals were nevertheless rejected by the British cabinet; on which the Abbe says,—

“ It is in such a circumstance as
 “ this; it is in the time when noble
 “ pride elevates the soul superior to
 “ all terror; when nothing is seen
 “ more dreadful than the shame of
 “ receiving the law, and when there
 “ is no doubt or hesitation which to
 “ chuse, between ruin and dishonour;
 “ it is then, that the greatness of a
 “ nation is displayed. I acknow-
 “ ledge however, that men, accus-
 “ tomed to judge of things by the
 “ event, call great and perilous re-
 “ solutions, heroism or madness, ac-
 “ cording to the good or bad success
 “ with which they have been attend-
 “ ed. If then, I should be asked,
 “ what is the name which shall in
 “ years to come be given to the firm-
 “ ness, which was in this moment
 “ exhibited by the English, I shall
 “ answer that I do not know. But
 “ that which it deserves I know. I
 “ know that the annals of the world
 “ hold out to us but rarely, the au-
 “ gust and majestic spectacle of a
 “ nation, which chuses rather to
 “ renounce its duration than its
 “ glory.”

In this paragraph the conception is lofty and the expression elegant; but the colouring is too high for the original, and the likeness fails through an excess of graces. To fit the powers of thinking and the turn of language to the subject, so as to

bring out a clear conclusion that shall hit the point in question and nothing else, is the true criterion of writing. But the greater part of the Abbe's writings (if he will pardon me the remark) appear to me uncentral and burthened with variety. They represent a beautiful wilderness without paths; in which the eye is diverted by every thing, without being particularly directed to any thing; and in which it is agreeable to be lost, and difficult to find the way out.

Before I offer any other remark on the spirit and composition of the above passage, I shall compare it with the circumstance it alludes to.

The circumstance then does not deserve the encomium. The rejection was not prompted by her fortitude, but her vanity. She did not view it as a case of despair or even of extreme danger, and consequently the determination to renounce her duration rather than her glory, cannot apply to the condition of her mind. She had then high expectations of subjugating America, and had no other naval force against her than France; neither was she certain that rejecting the mediation of Spain would combine that power with France. New mediations might arise more favourable than those she had refused. But if they should not, and Spain should join, she still saw that it would only bring out her naval force against France and Spain, which was not wanted and could not be employed against America, and habits of thinking had taught her to believe herself superior to both.

But in any case to which the consequence might point, there was nothing to impress her with the idea of renouncing her duration. It is not

the policy of Europe to suffer the extinction of any power, but only to lop off or prevent its dangerous increase. She was likewise freed by situation from the internal and immediate horrors of invasion; was rolling in dissipation and looking for conquests; and tho' she suffered nothing but the expence of war, she still had a greedy eye to magnificent reimbursement.

But if the Abbe is delighted with high and striking singularities of character, he might, in America, have found ample field for encomium. Here was a people, who could not know what part the world would take, for or against them; and who were venturing on an untried scheme, in opposition to a power, against which more formidable nations had failed. They had every thing to learn but the principles which supported them, and every thing to procure that was necessary for their defence. They have at times seen themselves as low as distress could make them, without shewing the least stagger in their fortitude; and been raised again by the most unexpected events, without discovering an unmanly discomposure of joy. To hesitate or to despair are conditions equally unknown in America. Her mind was prepared for every thing; because her original and final resolu-

tion of succeeding or perishing included all possible circumstances.

The rejection of the British propositions in the year 1778, circumstanced as America was at that time, is a far greater instance of unshaken fortitude than the refusal of the Spanish mediation by the Court of London: And other historians, besides the Abbe, struck with the vastness of her conduct therein, have, like himself, attributed it to a circumstance which was then unknown, the alliance with France. Their error shews their idea of its greatness; because, in order to account for it, they have sought a cause suited to its magnitude, without knowing that the cause existed in the principles of the country.*)

But this passionate encomium of the Abbe is deservedly subject to moral and philosophical objections. It is the effusion of wild thinking, and has a tendency to prevent that humanity of reflection which the criminal conduct of Britain enjoins on her as a duty.—It is a laudanum to courtly iniquity.—It keeps in intoxicated sleep the conscience of a nation; and more mischief is effected by wrapping up guilt in splendid excuse, than by directly patronizing it.

Britain is now the only country which holds the world in disturbance and war; and instead of paying

*) Extract from "*A short review of the present reign*" in England.

Page 45. in the New Annual Register for the year 1780.

"The Commissioners, who, in consequence of Lord North's conciliatory bills, went over to America, to propose terms of peace to the colonies, were wholly unsuccessful. The concessions which formerly would have been received with the utmost gratitude, were rejected with disdain. Now was the time of American pride and haughtiness. It is probable, however, that it was not pride and haughtiness alone that dictated the Resolutions of Congress, but a distrust of the sincerity of the offers of Britain, a determination not to give up their independence, and, ABOVE ALL, THE ENGAGEMENTS INTO WHICH THEY HAD ENTERED BY THEIR LATE TREATY WITH FRANCE."

compliments to the excess of her crimes, the Abbe would have appeared much more in character, had he put to her, or to her monarch, this serious question—

Are there not miseries enough in the world, too difficult to be encountered and too pointed to be borne, without studying to enlarge the list and arming it with new destruction? Is life so very long, that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand and hasten out the period of duration? Is the path so elegantly smooth, so decked on every side and carpeted with joys, that wretchedness is wanted to enrich it as a foil? Go ask thine aching heart when sorrow from a thousand causes wound it, go ask thy sickened self when every medicine fails, whether this be the case or not?

Quitting my remarks on this head, I proceed to another, in which the Abbe has let loose a vein of ill-nature, and, what is still worse, of injustice.

After cavilling at the treaty, he goes on to characterize the several parties combined in the war—"Is it possible," says the Abbe, "that a strict union should long subsist amongst confederates of characters so opposite as the hasty, light, disdainful Frenchman, the jealous, haughty, sly, slow, circumspective Spaniard, and the American, who is secretly snatching looks at the mother country, and would rejoice, were they compatible with his independence, at the disasters of his allies."

To draw foolish portraits of each other, is a mode of attack and reprimand, which the greater part of mankind are fond of indulging. The

serious philosopher should be above it, more especially in cases from which no possible good can arise, and mischief may, and where no received provocation can palliate the offence.—The Abbe might have invented a difference of character for every country in the world, and they in return might find others for him, till in the war of wit all real character is lost. The pleasantry of one nation or the gravity of another may, by a little penciling, be distorted into whimsical features, and the painter become as much laughed at as the painting.

But why did not the Abbe look a little deeper and bring forth the excellencies of the several parties? Why did he not dwell with pleasure on that greatness of character, that superiority of heart, which has marked the conduct of France in her conquests, and which has forced an acknowledgment even from Britain.

There is one line, at least, (and many others might be discovered) in which the confederates unite, which is, that of a rival eminence in their treatment of their enemies. Spain, in her conquest of Minorca and the Bahama islands confirms this remark. America has been invariable in her lenity from the beginning of the war, notwithstanding the high provocations she has experienced. It is England only who has been insolent and cruel.

But why must America be charged with a crime undeserved by her conduct, more so by her principles, and which, if a fact, would be fatal to her honour? I mean that of want of attachment to her allies, or rejoicing in their disasters. She, it is true, has been assiduous in shewing to the world that she was not the aggressor

towards England, that the quarrel was not of her seeking, or, at that time, even of her wishing. But to draw inferences from her candour, and even from her justification, to stab her character by, and I see nothing else from which they can be supposed to be drawn, is unkind and unjust.

Does her rejection of the British propositions in 1778, before she knew of any alliance with France, correspond with the Abbe's description of her mind? Does a single instance of her conduct since that time justify it?—But there is still better evidence to apply to, which is, that of all the mails, which at different times have been way-laid on the road, in divers parts of America, and taken and carried into New-York, and from which the most secret and confidential private letters, as well as those from authority, have been published, not one of them, I repeat it, not a single one of them, gives countenance to such a charge.

This is not a country where men are under government restraint in speaking; and if there is any kind of restraint, it arises from a fear of popular resentment. Now, if nothing in her private or public correspondence favours such a suggestion, and if the general disposition of the country is such as to make it unsafe for a man to shew an appearance of joy at any disaster to her ally, on what grounds, I ask, can the accusation stand? What company the Abbe may have kept in France, we cannot know; but this we know, that the account he gives does not apply to America.

Had the Abbe been in America at the time the news arrived of the disaster of the fleet under Count de Grasse, in the West-Indies, he would have

seen his vast mistake. Neither do I remember any instance, except the loss of Charlestown, in which the public mind suffered more severe and pungent concern, or underwent more agitations of hope and apprehension as to the truth or falsehood of the report. Had the loss been all our own it could not have had a deeper effect, yet it was not one of these cases which reached to the independence of America.

In the geographical account which the Abbe gives of the Thirteen States, he is so exceedingly erroneous, that to attempt a particular refutation, would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself. And as it is a matter neither political, historical, nor sentimental, and which can always be contradicted by the extent and natural circumstances of the country, I shall pass it over; with this additional remark, that I never yet saw an European description of America that was true, neither can any person gain a just idea of it, but by coming to it.

Though I have already extended this letter beyond what I at first proposed, I am, nevertheless, obliged to omit many observations, I originally designed to have made. I wish there had been no occasion for making any. But the wrong ideas which the Abbe's work had a tendency to excite, and the prejudicial impressions they might make, must be an apology for my remarks, and the freedom with which they are done.

I observe the Abbe has made a sort of epitome of a considerable part of the pamphlet *Common Sense*, and introduced it in that form into his publication. But there are other places where the Abbe has borrowed freely from the same pamphlet without acknowledging it. The difference be-

tween society and government, with which the pamphlet opens, is taken from it, and in some expressions almost literally, into the Abbe's work, as if originally his own; and through the whole of the Abbe's remarks on this head, the idea in Common Sense is so

closely copied and pursued, that the difference is only in words, and in the arrangement of the thoughts, and not in the thoughts themselves *.

But as it is time I should come to a conclusion of my letter, I shall forbear all further observations on the

* COMMON SENSE.

"Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them: whereas they are not only different, but have different origins."

"Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices."

ABBE RAYNAL.

"Care must be taken not to confound together society with government. That they may be known distinctly, their origin should be considered."

"Society originates in the wants of men, government in their vices. Society tends always to good; government ought always to tend to the repressing of evil."

In the following paragraphs there is less likeness in the language, but the ideas in the one are evidently copied from the other.

COMMON SENSE.

"In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons, meeting in some sequestered part of the earth unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the peopling of any country or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be our first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto. The strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance of another, who, in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labour out the common period of life, without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber, he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger, in the mean time, would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune, would be death; for though neither might be immediately mortal, yet either of them would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.—Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede and render

ABBE RAYNAL.

"Man, thrown, as it were, by chance upon the globe, surrounded by all the evils of nature, obliged continually to defend and protect his life against the storms and tempests of the air, against the inundations of water, against the fire of volcanoes, against the intemperance of rigid and torrid zones, against the sterility of the earth, which refuses him aliment, or its baneful fecundity, which makes poison spring up beneath his feet; in short, against the claws and teeth of savage beasts, who dispute with him his habitation and his prey, and, attacking his person, seem resolved to render themselves rulers of this globe, of which he thinks himself to be the master; Man, in this state, alone and abandoned to himself, could do nothing for his preservation. It was necessary, therefore, that he should unite himself, and associate with his like, in order to bring together their strength and intelligence in common stock. It is by this union that he has triumphed over so many evils, that he has fashioned this globe to his use, restrained the rivers, subjugated the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered a part of the animals in obliging them to serve him, and driven others far from his empire, to the depth of deserts or of woods, where their number diminishes from age to age. What a man alone would not have been able to effect,

Abbe's work, and take a concise view of the state of public affairs, since the time in which that performance was published.

A mind habited to actions of meanness and injustice, commits them without reflection, or with a very partial one; for on what other ground than this, can we account for the declaration of war against the Dutch: To gain an idea of the politics which actuated the British Ministry to this measure, we must enter into the opinion which they, and the English in general, had formed of the temper of the Dutch nation; and from thence infer what their expectation of the consequences would be.

Could they have imagined that Holland would have seriously made a common cause with France, Spain, and America, the British Ministry would never have dared to provoke them. It would have been a madness in politics to have done so; unless their views were to hasten on a period of such emphatic distress, as should justify the concessions which they saw they must one day or other make to the world, and for which they wanted an apology to themselves.—There is a temper in some men which seeks a pretence for submission. Like a ship disabled in action and unfitted to conti-

nue it, it waits the approach of a still larger one to strike to, and feels relief at the opportunity. Whether this is greatness or littleness of mind, I am not enquiring into. I should suppose it to be the latter, because it proceeds from the want of knowing how to bear misfortune in its original state.

But the subsequent conduct of the British cabinet has shewn that this was not their plan of politics, and consequently their motives must be sought for in another line.

The truth is, that the British had formed a very humble opinion of the Dutch nation. They looked on them as a people who would submit to anything; that they might insult them as they liked, plunder them as they pleased, and still the Dutch dared not to be provoked.

If this be taken as the opinion of the British cabinet, the measure is easily accounted for; because it goes on the supposition, that when, by a declaration of hostilities, they had robbed the Dutch of some millions sterling, (and to rob them was popular) they could make peace with them again whenever they pleased, and on almost any terms the British Ministry should propose. And no sooner was the plundering committed, than the

COMMON SENSE.

the obligations of law and government unnecessary, while they remained perfectly just to each other. But as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other, and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue."

ABBE RAYNAL.

effect, men have executed in concert; and altogether they preserve their work. Such is the origin, such the advantages, and the end of society.—Government owes its birth to the necessity of preventing and repressing the injuries which the associated individuals had to fear from one another. It is the sentinel who watches, in order that the common labours be not disturbed."

accommodation was set on foot, and failed.

When once the mind loses the sense of its own dignity, it loses, likewise, the ability of judging of it in another. And the American war has thrown Britain into such a variety of absurd situations, that, arguing from herself, she sees not in what conduct national dignity consists in other countries. From Holland she expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted, in a number of instances during the present war, the same character herself.

To be allied to, or connected with Britain, seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Holland and America are instances of the reality of this remark. Make those countries the allies of France or Spain, and Britain will court them with civility, and treat them with respect; make them her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them. In the first case, she feels some apprehensions at offending them, because they have support at hand; in the latter, those apprehensions do not exist. Such, however, has hitherto been her conduct.

Another measure which has taken place since the publication of the Abbe's work, and likewise since the time of my beginning this letter, is the change in the British ministry. What line the new cabinet will pursue respecting America, is at this time unknown; neither is it very material, unless they are seriously disposed to a general and honourable peace.

Repeated experience has shewn, not only the impracticability of conquering America, but the still higher impossibility of conquering her mind, or recalling her back to her former

condition of thinking. Since the commencement of the war, which is now approaching to eight years, thousands and tens of thousands have advanced, and are daily advancing into the first stage of manhood, who know nothing of Britain but as a barbarous enemy, and to whom the independence of America appears as much the natural and established government of the country, as that of England does to an Englishman. And on the other hand, thousands of the aged, who had British ideas, have dropped, and are daily dropping, from the stage of business and life. The natural progress of generation and decay operates every hour to the disadvantage of Britain. Time and death, hard enemies to contend with, fight constantly against her interest; and the bills of mortality, in every part of America, are the thermometers of her decline. The children in the streets are from their cradle bred to consider her as their only foe. They hear of her cruelties; of their fathers, uncles, and kindred killed; they see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, and the common tradition of the school they go to, tells them, *those things were done by the British*.

These are circumstances which the mere English state politician, who considers man only in a state of manhood, does not attend to. He gets entangled with parties coeval or equal with himself at home, and thinks not how fast the rising generation in America is growing beyond his knowledge of them, or they of him. In a few years all personal remembrance will be lost, and who is King or Minister in England, will be little known and scarcely enquired after.

The new British administration is composed of persons who have ever

been against the war, and who have constantly reprobated all the violent measures of the former one. They considered the American war as destructive to themselves, and opposed it on that ground. But what are these things to America? She has nothing to do with English parties. The ins and the outs are nothing to her. It is the whole country she is at war with, or must be at peace with.

Were every Minister in England a *Chatham*, it would now weigh little or nothing in the scale of American politics. Death has preserved to the memory of this statesman, *that fame*, which he, by living, would have lost. His plans and opinions, towards the latter part of his life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much reprobated here, as those of Lord North; and, considering him a wise man, they abound with inconsistencies amounting to absurdities.

It has apparently been the fault of many in the late minority, to suppose, that America would agree to certain terms with them, were they in place, which she would not ever listen to from the then administration. This idea can answer no other purpose than to prolong the war; and Britain may, at the expence of many more millions, learn the fatality of such mistakes. If the new ministry wisely avoid this hopeless policy, they will prove themselves better pilots, and wiser men, than they are conceived to be; for it is every day expected to see their bark strike upon some hidden rock and go to pieces.

But there is a line in which they may be great. A more brilliant opening needs not to present itself;

and it is such a one, as true magnanimity would improve, and humanity rejoice in.

A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind,—an heart which embraces the universe. Instead of shutting herself up in an island, and quarrelling with the world, she would derive more lasting happiness, and acquire more real riches, by generously mixing with it, and bravely saying, I am the enemy of none. It is not now a time for little contrivances, or artful politics. The European world is too experienced to be imposed upon, and America too wise to be duped. It must be something new and masterly that must succeed. The idea of seducing America from her independence, or corrupting her from her alliance, is a thought too little for a great mind, and impossible for any honest one, to attempt. Whenever politics are applied to debauch mankind from their integrity, and dissolve the virtues of human nature, they become detestable; and to be a statesman upon this plan, is to be a commissioned villain. He who aims at it, leaves a vacancy in his character, which may be filled up with the worst of epithets.

If the disposition of England should be such, as not to agree to a general and honourable peace, and that the war must, at all events, continue longer, I cannot help wishing, that the alliances which America has or may enter into, may become the only objects of the war. She wants an opportunity of shewing to the world, that she holds her honour as dear and sacred as her independence, and that she will in no situation forsake those, whom no negotiations could induce

to forsake her. Peace to every reflective mind is a desirable object; but *that peace* which is accompanied with a ruined character, becomes a crime to the seducer, and a curse upon the seduced.

But where is the impossibility, or even the great difficulty, of England forming a friendship with France and Spain, and making it a national virtue to renounce for ever those prejudiced inveteracies it has been her custom to cherish; and which, while they serve to sink her with an encumbering enormity of debt, by involving her in fruitless wars, become likewise the bane of her repose, and the destruction of her manners? We had once the fetters that she has now, but experience has shewn us the mistake, and thinking justly has set us right.

The true idea of a great nation is that which extends and promotes the principles of universal society. Whose mind rises above the atmospheres of local thoughts, and considers man-

kind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one Creator. The rage for conquest has had its fashion, and its day. Why may not the amiable virtues have the same? The Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity, have left behind them their monuments of destruction, and are remembered with hatred; while these more exalted characters, who first taught society and science, are blest with the gratitude of every age and country. Of more use was one philosopher, though a heathen, to the world, than all the heathen conquerors that ever existed.

Should the present revolution be distinguished by opening a new system of extended civilization, it will receive from heaven the highest evidence of approbation: and as this is a subject to which the Abbe's powers are so eminently suited, I recommend it to his attention, with the affection of a friend, and the ardour of a universal citizen.

P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE closing the foregoing letter, some intimations, respecting a general peace, have made their way to America. On what authority or foundation they stand, or how near or remote such an event may be, are circumstances I am not enquiring into. But as the subject must sooner or later become a matter of serious attention, it may not be improper, even at this early period, candidly to investigate some points that are connected with it, or lead towards it.

The independence of America is at this moment as firmly established as any country in a state of war. It is not length of time, but power, that gives stability. Nations at war know nothing of each other on the score of antiquity. It is their present and immediate strength, together with their connections, that must support them. To which we may add, that a right which originated to-day, is as much a right, as if it had the sanction of a thousand years; and therefore the independence and present governments of America are in no more danger of being subverted, because they are modern, than that of England is secure, because it is ancient.

The politics of Britain, so far as they respected America, were originally conceived in idiotism, and acted in madness. There is not a step which bears the smallest trace of rationality. In her management of the war, she has laboured to be wretched, and studied to be hated; and in all her former prepositions for accommodation, she has discovered a total ig-

norance of mankind, and of those natural and unalterable sensations by which they are so generally governed. How she may conduct herself in the present or future business of negotiating a peace, is yet to be proved.

He is a weak politician who does not understand human nature, and penetrate into the effect which measures of government will have upon the mind. All the miscarriages of Britain have arisen from this defect. The former Ministry acted as if they supposed mankind to be *without a mind*; and the present Ministry, as if America was *without a memory*. The one must have supposed we were incapable of feeling; and the other, that we could not remember injuries.

There is likewise another line in which politicians mistake, which is that of not rightly calculating, or rather of misjudging, the consequence which any given circumstance will produce. Nothing is more frequent, as well in common as in political life, than to hear people complain, that such or such means produced an event directly contrary to their intentions. But the fault lies in their not judging rightly what the event would be; for the means produced only its proper and natural consequence.

It is very probable, that in a treaty for peace, Britain will contend for some post or other in North America; perhaps Canada or Halifax, or both: and I infer this from the known deficiency of her politics, which have ever yet made use of means, whose

natural event was against both her interest and her expectation. But the question with her ought to be, Whether it is worth her while to hold them, and what will be the consequence?

Respecting Canada, one or other of the two following will take place, viz. If Canada should people, it will revolt; and if it do not people, it will not be worth the expence of holding. And the same may be said of Halifax, and the country round it. But Canada *never will* people; neither is there any occasion for contrivances on one side or the other, for nature alone will do the whole.

Britain may put herself to great expences in sending settlers to Canada; but the descendants of those settlers will be Americans, as other descendants have been before them. They will look round and see the neighbouring States sovereign and free, respected abroad and trading at large with the world; and the natural love of liberty, the advantages of commerce, the blessings of independence and of a happier climate, and a richer soil, will draw them southward, and the effect will be, that Britain will sustain the expence, and America reap the advantage.

One would think that the experience which Britain has had of America, would entirely sicken her of all thoughts of continental colonization; and any part which she might retain, will only become to her a field of jealousy and thorns, of debate and contention, for ever struggling for privileges, and meditating revolt. She may form new settlements, but they will be for us; they will become part of the United States of America; and that against all her contrivances to prevent it, or without any endeavours of ours to promote it. In the first place,

she cannot draw from them a revenue until they are able to pay one, and when they are so, they will be above subjection. Men soon become attached to the soil they live upon, and incorporated with the prosperity of the place; and it signifies but little what opinions they come over with, for time, interest, and new connections will render them obsolete, and the next generation know nothing of them.

Were Britain truly wise she would lay hold of the present opportunity to disentangle herself from all continental embarrassments in North-America, and that not only to avoid future broils and troubles, but to save expences. For to speak explicitly on the matter, I would not, were I an European power, have Canada, under the conditions that Britain must retain it, could it be given to me. It is one of those kind of dominions that is, and ever will be, a constant charge upon any foreign holder.

As to Halifax, it will become useless to England after the present war, and the loss of the United States. A harbour, when the dominion is gone, for the purpose of which only it was wanted, can be attended only with expence. There are, I doubt not, thousands of people in England, who suppose, that those places are a profit to the nation, whereas they are directly the contrary, and instead of producing any revenue, a considerable part of the revenue of England is annually drawn off, to support the expence of holding them.

Gibraltar is another instance of national ill policy. A post which in time of peace is not wanted, and in time of war is of no use, must at all times be useless. Instead of affording protection to a navy, it requires the aid of one to maintain it. And to sup-

pose that Gibraltar commands the Mediterranean, or the pass into it, or the trade of it, is to suppose a detected falsehood; because though Britain holds the post, she has lost the other three, and every benefit she expected from it. And to say that all this happens because it is besieged by land and water, is to say nothing, for this will always be the case in time of war, while France and Spain keep up superior fleets, and Britain holds the place.—So that, though as an impenetrable inaccessible rock it may be held by the one, it is always in the power of the other to render it useless and excessively chargeable.

I should suppose that one of the principal objects of Spain in besieging it, is to show to Britain, that though she may not take it, she can command it, that is, she can shut it up, and prevent its being used as a harbour, though not a garrison.—But the short way to reduce Gibraltar, is, to attack the British fleet; for Gibraltar is as dependent on a fleet for support as a bird is on its wing for food, and when wounded there it starves.

There is another circumstance which the people of England have not only not attended to, but seem to be utterly ignorant of, and that is, the difference between permanent power, and accidental power, considered in a national sense.

By permanent power, I mean, a natural inherent and perpetual ability in a nation, which though always in being, may not be always in action, or not always advantageously directed; and by accidental power, I mean, a fortunate or accidental disposition or exercise of national strength, in whole or in part.

There undoubtedly was a time when any one European nation, with

only eight or ten ships of war, equal to the present ships of the line, could have carried terror to all others, who had not began to build a navy, however great their natural ability might be for that purpose: But this can be considered only as accidental, and not as a standard to compare permanent power by, and could last no longer than until those powers built as many or more ships than the former. After this a larger fleet was necessary, in order to be superior; and a still larger would again supercede it. And thus mankind have gone on building fleet upon fleet, as occasion or situation dictated. And this reduces it to an original question, which is: Which power can build and man the largest number of ships? The natural answer to which, is, That power which has the largest revenue and the greatest number of inhabitants, provided its situation of coast affords sufficient conveniencies.

France being a nation on the continent of Europe, and Britain an island in its neighbourhood, each of them derived different ideas from their different situations. The inhabitants of Britain could carry on no foreign trade, nor stir from the spot they dwelt upon, without the assistance of shipping; but this was not the case with France. The idea therefore of a navy did not arise to France from the same original and immediate necessity which produced it to England. But the question is, that when both of them turn their attention, and employ their revenues the same way, which can be superior?

The annual revenue of France is nearly double that of England, and her number of inhabitants more than twice as many. Each of them has the same length of coast on the channel,

Besides which, France has several hundred miles extent on the bay of Biscay, and an opening on the Mediterranean: and every day proves, that practice and exercise make sailors, as well as soldiers, in one country as well as another.

If then Britain can maintain an hundred ships of the line, France can as well support an hundred and fifty, because her revenues and her population are as equal to the one as those of England are to the other. And the only reason why she has not done it, is because she has not till very lately attended to it. But when she sees, as she now sees, that a navy is the first engine of power, she can easily accomplish it.

England very falsely, and ruinously for herself, infers, that because she had the advantage of France, while France had the smaller navy, that for that reason it is always to be so. Whereas it may be clearly seen, that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy, and that she is able to be as superior to England in the extent of a navy, as she is in the extent of her revenues and her population. And England may lament the day, when, by her insolence and injustice, she provoked in France a maritime disposition.

It is in the power of the combined fleets to conquer every island in the West Indies, and reduce all the British navy in those places. For were France and Spain to send their whole naval force in Europe to those islands, it would not be in the power of Britain to follow them with an equal force. She would still be twenty or thirty ships inferior, were she to send every vessel she had, and in

the mean time all the foreign trade of England would lay exposed to the Dutch.

It is a maxim, which, I am persuaded, will ever hold good, and more especially in naval operations, that a great power ought never to move in detachments, if it can possibly be avoided; but to go with its whole force to some important object, the reduction of which shall have a decisive effect upon the war. Had the whole of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe come last spring to the West Indies, every island had been their own, Rodney their prisoner, and his fleet their prize. From the United States the combined fleets can be supplied with provisions, without the necessity of drawing them from Europe, which is not the case with England.

Accident has thrown some advantages in the way of England, which, from the inferiority of her navy, she had not a right to expect. For though she has been obliged to fly before the combined fleets, yet Rodney has twice had the fortune to fall in with detached squadrons, to which he was superior in numbers: The first off Cape St. Vincent, where he had nearly two to one, and the other in the West Indies, where he had a majority of six ships. Victories of this kind almost produce themselves. They are won without honor, and suffered without disgrace: And are ascribable to the chance of meeting, not to the superiority of fighting. For the same Admiral, under whom they were obtained, was unable, in three former engagements, to make the least impression on a fleet consisting of an equal number of ships with his own,

and compounded for the events by declining the actions *.

To conclude : if it may be said that Britain has numerous enemies, it likewise proves that she has given numerous offences. Insolence is sure to provoke hatred, whether in a nation or an individual. The want of manners in the British court may be seen even in its birth-days and new-years odes, which are calculated to infatuate the vulgar, and disgust the man of refinement : And her former overbearing rudeness, and insufferable injustice on the seas, have made every commercial nation her foe. Her fleets were employed as engines of prey ; and acted on the surface of the deep the character which the shark does beneath it.—On the other hand the Combined Powers are taking a popular part, and will render their reputation immortal, by establishing the perfect freedom of the ocean, to which all countries have a right, and are interested in accomplishing. The sea is the world's highway ; and he who arrogates a prerogative over it, transgresses the right, and justly brings on himself the chastisement of nations.

Perhaps it might be of some service to the future tranquillity of mankind, were an article introduced into the next general peace, that no one nation should, in time of peace, exceed a certain number of ships of war. Something of this kind seems necessary ; for according to the present fashion, half the world will get upon the wa-

ter, and there appears no end to the extent to which navies may be carried. Another reason is, that navies add nothing to the manners or morals of a people. The sequestered life which attends the service, prevents the opportunities of society, and is too apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas and language, and that more in ships of war than in commercial employ ; because in the latter they mix more with the world, and are nearer related to it. I mention this remark as a general one ; and not applied to any one country more than another.

Britain has now had the trial of above seven years, with an expence of nearly an hundred million pounds sterling ; and every month in which she delays to conclude a peace, costs her another million sterling, over and above her ordinary expences of government, which are a million more ; so that her total *monthly* expence is two million pounds sterling ; which is equal to the whole *yearly* expence of America, all charges included. Judge then who is best able to continue it.

She has likewise many atonements to make to an injured world, as well in one quarter as another. And instead of pursuing that temper of arrogance, which serves only to sink her in the esteem, and entail on her the dislike, of all nations, she will do well to reform her manners, retrench her expences, live peaceably with her neighbours, and think of war no more.

* See the accounts, either English or French, of three actions in the West Indies, between Count de Guichen and Admiral Rodney, in 1780.

Philadelphia, August 21, 1782.

P A I N E ' S W O R K S .

L E T T E R,

TO THE

M A R Q U I S O F L A N S D O W N .

MY LORD,

A SPEECH which has been printed in several of the British and New-York Newspapers, as coming from your Lordship, in answer to one from the Duke of Richmond of the 10th of July last, contains expressions and opinions so new and singular, and so enveloped in mysterious reasoning, that I address this publication to you, for the purpose of giving them a free and candid examination. The speech I allude to is in these words :

“ His Lordship said, it had been
“ mentioned in another place, that
“ he had been guilty of inconsistency.
“ To clear himself of this, he as-
“ serted that he still held the same
“ principles in respect to American
“ Independence which he at first im-
“ bibed. He had been, and yet was
“ of opinion, whenever the Parlia-
“ ment of Great Britain acknow-
“ ledges that point, the sun of Eng-
“ land's glory is set for ever. Such
“ were the sentiments he possessed on
“ a former day, and such the senti-
“ ments he continued to hold at this
“ hour. It was the opinion of Lord
“ Chatham, as well as many able

“ statesmen. Other noble Lords,
“ however, think differently ; and as
“ the majority of the Cabinet sup-
“ port them, he acquiesced in the
“ measure, dissenting from the idea ;
“ and the point is settled for bring-
“ ing the matter into the full dis-
“ cussion of Parliament, where it
“ will be candidly, fairly, and im-
“ partially debated. The Indepen-
“ dence of America would end in the
“ ruin of England ; and that a peace
“ patched up with France would give
“ that proud enemy the means of
“ yet trampling on this country.
“ The sun of England's glory he
“ wished not to see set for ever ; he
“ looked for a spark at least to be
“ left, which might in time light us
“ up to a new day. But if Indepen-
“ dence was to be granted, if Par-
“ liament deemed that measure pru-
“ dent, he foresaw in his own mind
“ that England was undone. He
“ wished to God that he had been
“ deputed to Congress, that he might
“ plead the cause of that country as
“ well as of this, and that he might
“ exercise whatever powers he pos-

“ fessed as an orator, to save both
 “ from ruin, in a conviction to Con-
 “ gress, that, if their Independence
 “ was signed, their liberties were
 “ gone for ever.

“ Peace, his Lordship added, was
 “ a desirable object, but it must be
 “ an honourable peace, and not an
 “ humiliating one, dictated by France,
 “ or insisted on by America. It
 “ was very true, this kingdom was
 “ not in a flourishing state, it was
 “ impoverished by war. But if we
 “ were not rich, it was evident that
 “ France was poor. If we were
 “ straitened in our finances, the ene-
 “ my were exhausted in their resour-
 “ ces. This was a great empire ; it
 “ abounded with brave men, who
 “ were able and willing to fight in
 “ a common cause ; the language of
 “ humiliation should not, therefore,
 “ be the language of Great Britain.
 “ His Lordship said, that he was not
 “ ashamed nor afraid of those expres-
 “ sions going to America. There
 “ were numbers, great numbers there,
 “ who were of the same way of
 “ thinking, in respect to that coun-
 “ try being dependent on this, and
 “ who, with his Lordship, perceiv-
 “ ed ruin and independence linked
 “ together.”

Thus for the speech ; on which I
 remark,—That his Lordship is a total
 stranger to the mind and sentiments
 of America ; that he has wrapped
 himself up in fond delusion, that
 something less than Independence
 may, under his Administration, be
 accepted ; and he wishes himself sent
 to Congress, to prove the most ex-
 traordinary of all doctrines, which
 is, that INDEPENDENCE, the subli-
 mest of all human conditions, is
 loss of liberty.

In answer to which we may say,
 that in order to know what the con-
 trary word DEPENDENCE means, we
 have only to look back to those years
 of severe humiliation, when the mild-
 est of all petitions could obtain no
 other notice than the haughtiest of all
 insults ; and when the base terms of
 unconditional submission were de-
 manded, or undistinguishable destruc-
 tion threatened. It is nothing to us
 that the Ministry have been changed,
 for they may be changed again. The
 guilt of government is the crime
 of a whole country, and the nation
 that can, though but for a moment,
 think and act as England has done,
 can never afterwards be believed or
 trusted. There are cases in which it
 is as impossible to restore character
 to life, as it is to recover the dead.
 It is a phoenix that can expire but
 once, and from whose ashes there is
 no resurrection. Some offences are
 of such a slight composition, that
 they reach no farther than the temper,
 and are created or cured by a thought.
 But the sin of England has struck the
 heart of America, and nature has not
 left it in our power to say we can
 forgive.

Your Lordship wishes for an op-
 portunity to plead before Congress
the cause of England and America,
and to save, as you say, both from
ruin.

That the country, which, for
 more than seven years, has fought
 our destruction, should now cringe
 to solicit our protection, is adding
 the wretchedness of disgrace to the
 misery of disappointment ; and if
 England has the least spark of sup-
 posed honour left, that spark must
 be darkened by asking, and extin-
 guished by receiving, the smallest

favour from America : for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living than he who dies.

But a thousand pleadings, even from your Lordship, can have no effect. Honour, interest, and every sensation of the heart, would plead against you. We are a people who think not as you think ; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are exceedingly different. We have been the seat of war : you have seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight ; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry, and now the striking monuments of British brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought, and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know : and therefore your supposed system of reasoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themselves.

The question, whether England shall accede to the Independence of America, and which your Lordship says is to undergo a parliamentary discussion, is so very simple, and composed of so few cases, that it scarcely needs a debate.

It is the only way out of an expensive and ruinous war, which has now no object, and without which acknowledgment there can be no peace.

But your Lordship says, “ *The sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the Independence of America.*” Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just, to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

But the expression, if true, is the greatest confession of disgrace that could be made, and furnishes America with the highest notions of sovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made use of an idea of much the same kind,—“ *Relinquish America!*” says he—“ *What is it but to desire a giant to shrink spontaneously into a dwarf.*”

Alas ! are those people who call themselves Englishmen, of so little internal consequence, that when America is gone, or shuts her eyes upon them, their sun is set, they can shine no more, but grope about in obscurity, and contract into insignificant animals ? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting ? Is the case so strangely altered, that those who once thought we could not live without them, now declare they cannot exist without us ? Will they tell to the world, and that from their first Minister of State, that America is their all in all ; that it is by her importance only they can live, and breathe, and have a being ? Will they, who threatened to bring us to

their feet, now cast themselves at ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become so unqualified to debate on Independence, that they have lost all idea of it in themselves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America to cover their insignificance? Or, if America is lost, is it manly to sob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of disgrace? Surely, the more consistent conduct would be, to bear it without complaint; and to shew that England, without America, can preserve her independence, and a suitable rank with other European Powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childish.

But Lord Shelburne thinks that something may yet be done. What that something is, or how it is to be accomplished, is a matter in obscurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expence of an hundred million pounds sterling, and the loss of two armies, must positively decide that point. Besides, the British have lost their interest in America with the disaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new scene left for delusion: and the thousands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the settlements they had acquired, and be conveyed like transports to cultivate the deserts of Augustine and Nova Scotia, has put an end to all farther expectations of aid.

If you cast your eyes on the people of England, what have they to console themselves with for the millions expended? or, what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can

carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for less than you can defray the charges of war and government for one year. And I, who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their share of the expence much better than the people of England can. Besides, it is their own estates and property, their own rights, liberties and government, they are defending; and were they not to do it, they would deserve to lose all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their punishment just.

The British army in America care not how long the war lasts. They enjoy an easy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the spoils of another; and, between their plunder and their pay, may go home rich. But the case is very different with the labouring farmer, the working tradesman, and the necessitous poor in England, the sweat of whose brow goes day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of the country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says Lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then, I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if Lord Shelburne will not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapsody of inconstance. For to say, as Lord Shelburne has numberless times said, that the war against America is ruinous, and yet to continue the prosecution of that ruinous war for the purpose of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be understood. Neither is it possible to see how the Independence of America is to accomplish the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not effect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter than she is now; nor England derive less advantages from her than at present; why then is ruin to follow in the best state of the case, and not in the worst! And if not in the worst, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions a-year less expences than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamour of national savings and œconomy; but surely the true œconomy would be, to save the whole charge of a silly, foolish, and headstrong war; because, compared with this, all other retrenchments are bawbles and trifles.

But is it possible that Lord Shelburne can be serious in supposing the least advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expence, or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another satisfy him, but all must become prisoners? Must England ever be the sport of hope and the dupe of delusion? Sometimes our currency was to fail; another time our army was to disband: then whole provinces were to revolt. Such a General said this and that;

another wrote so and so. Lord Chatham was of this opinion; and Lord Somebody else of another. To-day 20,000 Russians and 20 Russian ships of the line were to come; to-morrow the Empress was abused without mercy or decency.—Then the Emperor of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the King of Prussia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo here! and then it was, Lo there! Sometimes this Power, and sometimes that Power, was to engage in the war, just as if the whole world was as mad and foolish as Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every straw been caught at, and every Will-with-a-Wisp led them a new dance.

This year a still newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wishes to be sent to Congress, and he thinks that something may be done.

Are not the repeated declarations of Congress, and which all America supports, that they will not even hear any proposals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal Independence of America is recognised; are not, I say, these declarations answer enough?

But for England to receive any thing from America now, after so many insults, injuries, and outrages, acted towards us, would shew such a spirit of meanness in her, that we could not but despise her for accepting it. And so far from Lord Shelburne coming here to solicit it, it would be the greatest disgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed, at this time of day, to ask or owe any thing to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Englishman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even Lucifer would

scorn to reign in Heaven by permission, and yet an Englishman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or has a Land of Liberty so many charms, that to be a door-keeper in it is better than to be an English Minister of State?

But what can this expected something be? or, if obtained, what can it amount to, but new disgraces, contentions, and quarrels? The people of America have for years accustomed themselves to think and speak so freely and contemptuously of English authority, and the inveteracy is so deeply rooted, that a person invested with any authority from that country, and attempting to exercise it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look on him as an interloper, to whom their compassion permitted a residence. He would be no more than the Mungo of the farce; and if he disliked that he must set off. It would be a station of degradation, debased by our pity, and despised by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible situation than any she has yet suffered by the war. We have too high an opinion of ourselves, ever to think of yielding again the least obedience to outlandish authority; and for a thousand reasons, England would be the last country in the world to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral.

Surely she loves to fish in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or she would not now think of mingling her affairs with those of America. It would be like a foolish dotard taking to his arms the bride that despises him, or who has placed on his head the ensigns of her dis-

gust. It is kissing the hand that boxes his ears, and proposing to renew the exchange. The thought is as servile as the war was wicked, and shews the last scene of the drama as inconsistent as the first.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go*. Your Lordship had no hand in the separation, and you will gain no honour by temporising politics. Besides, there is something so exceedingly whimsical, unsteady, and even insincere in the present conduct of England, that she exhibits herself in the most dishonourable colours.

On the second of August last General Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote to General Washington in these words:

“ The resolutions of the House of
“ Commons of the 27th of February
“ last have been placed in your Ex-
“ cellency's hands, and intimations
“ given at the same time, that far-
“ ther pacific measures were likely
“ to follow. Since which, until the
“ present time, we have had no di-
“ rect communications from Eng-
“ land; but a mail is now arrived,
“ which brings us very important
“ information. We are acquainted,
“ Sir, *by authority*, that negotiations
“ for a general peace have already
“ commenced at Paris, and that Mr.
“ Grenville is invested with full
“ powers to treat with all the parties
“ at war, and is now at Paris in the
“ execution of his commission. And
“ we are farther, Sir, made acquaint-
“ ed, “ *that his Majesty, in order to*
“ *remove any obstacles to that peace*
“ *which he so ardently wishes to re-*
“ *store, has commanded his Ministers*
“ *to direct Mr. Grenville, that the*
“ *Independence of the Thirteen United*
“ *provinces, should be proposed by him*

*“ in the first instance, instead of making
“ it a condition of a general treaty.”*

Now, taking your present measures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this Letter, pray, what is the word of your King, or his Ministers, or the Parliament, good for? Must we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithless, treacherous men, whose assurances are fraud, and their language deceit? What opinion can we possibly form of you, but that you are a lost, abandoned, profligate nation, who sport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To say, after this, *that the sun of Great Britain will be set whenever she acknowledges the Independence of America*, when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of Government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconsistency. There were thousands in America who predicted the delusion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only system of finance, by which we can be called, or deserve to be called, a sovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might be worth attempting, but the sacrifice to obtain it is too high.

There were others who credited the assurance, because they thought it impossible that men who had their characters to establish, would begin it with a lie. The prosecution of the

*Philadelphia,
October 29, 1782.*

P. S. The manuscript copy of this letter is sent your Lordship, by the way of our Head Quarters, to New York, inclosing a late pamphlet of mine,

war by the former Ministry was savage and horrid; since which it has been mean, trickish, and delusive. The one went greedily into the passion of revenge, the other into the subtleties of low contrivance; till, between the crimes of both, there is scarcely left a man in America, be he Whig or Tory, who does not despise or detest the conduct of Britain.

The management of Lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and must be to the world, never to regard British assurances. A perfidy so notorious cannot be hid. It stands even in the public papers of New York, with the names of Carleton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the King of England is not to be believed: that the spirit of lying is the governing principle of the Ministry. It is holding up the character of the House of Commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such is the consequence which Lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authorised declarations contained in Carleton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every motive of honour, policy, and prudence, to have fulfilled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the least atonement you could possibly make to America, and the greatest kindness you could do to yourselves; for you will save millions by a general peace, and you will lose as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

addressed to the Abbe Raynal, which will serve to give your Lordship some idea of the principles and sentiments of America.

C. S.

A P P E N D I X.

TO THE AUTHORS OF

THE REPUBLICAN,

The two following Letters were first published in England in the Morning Post.

GENTLEMEN,

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of some persons to commence a Work under the title of *The Republican*.

As I am a Citizen of a country which knows no other Majesty than that of the People—no other Government than that of the Representative body—no other Sovereignty than that of the Laws, and which is attached to *France* both by Alliance and by Gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my services in support of principles as honourable to a nation as they are adapted to promote the happiness of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary, and political character of those who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myself honoured in their good opinion.

But I must at the same time observe, that from my ignorance of the French language, my works must necessarily undergo a translation; they can of course be but of little utility, and my offering must consist more of wishes than services—I must add, that I am obliged to pass a part of this summer in England and Ireland.

As the Public has done me the unmerited favour of recognizing me

under the appellation of “Common Sense,” which is my usual signature, I shall continue it in this publication to avoid mistakes, and to prevent my being supposed the author of works not my own. As to my Political Principles, I shall endeavour, in this letter, to trace their general features in such a manner, as that they cannot be misunderstood.

It is desirable in most instances to avoid that which may give even the least suspicion with respect to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the present occasion, where a perfect clearness of expression is necessary to the avoidance of any possible misinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find, that the work in question is entitled “*The Republican*.” This word expresses perfectly the idea which we ought to have of Government in general—*Res Publica*—the public affairs of a Nation.

As to the word *Monarchy*, though the address and intrigue of Courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the less of reproach or of insult to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original sense, signifies *the absolute Power of a single Individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The ap-

pellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. *France* is therefore not a *Monarchy*; it is insulted when called by that name. The servile spirit which characterises this species of Government is banished from *FRANCE*, and this country, like *AMERICA*, can now afford to Monarchy no more than a glance of disdain.

Of the errors which monarchic ignorance or knavery has spread through the world; the one, which bears the marks of the most dexterous invention, is the opinion that the system of *Republicanism* is only adapted to a small country, and that a *Monarchy* is suited, on the contrary, to those of greater extent. Such is the language of Courts, and such the sentiments which they have caused to be adopted in monarchic countries; but the opinion is contrary at the same time to principle and to experience.

The GOVERNMENT, to be of real use, should possess a complete knowledge of all the parties—all the circumstances, and all the interests of a nation. The monarchic system, in consequence, instead of being suited to a country of great extent, would be more admissible in a small territory, where an individual may be supposed to know the affairs and the interests of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the Government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this position we need only look to *SPAIN*, *RUSSIA*, *GERMANY*, *TURKEY*, and the whole of the East-

tern Continent—Countries for the deliverance of which I offer my most sincere wishes.

On the contrary, the true *Republican* system, by Election and Representation, offers the only means which are known, and in my opinion the only means which are possible of proportioning the wisdom and the information of a Government to the extent of a country.

The system of *Representation* is the strongest and most powerful center that can be devised for a nation. Its attraction acts so powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reasoning on the cause; and *FRANCE*, however distant its several parts, finds itself at this moment *an Whole* in its central Representation. The citizen is assured that his rights are protected, and the soldier feels that he is no longer the Slave of a Despot, but that he is become one of the Nation, and interested of course in its defence.

The States at present styled *Republican*, as *HOLLAND*, *GENOA*, *VENICE*, *BERNE*, &c. are not only unworthy of the name, but are actually in opposition to every Principle of a *Republican* Government, and the countries submitted to their power are, truly speaking, subjected to an *Aristocratic* Slavery!

It is, perhaps, impossible in the first steps which are made in a Revolution, to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in some instances to prevent the combination of both. Before the sense of a nation is sufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reserve—a timid prudence seizes on the human mind, and pre-

vents it from attaining its level, with that vigour and promptitude which belongs to *Right*.—An example of this influence discovers itself in the commencement of the present Revolution: but happily this discovery has been made before the Constitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

The *Hereditary Succession* can never exist as a matter of *right*; it is a *nullity*—a *nothing*. To admit the idea is to regard men as a species of property belonging to some individuals, either born or to be born! It is to consider our descendants, and all posterity as mere animals without a Right or a Will! It is, in fine, the most base and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human species, and which, for the honour of Humanity, should be destroyed for ever.

The idea of hereditary succession is so contrary to the Rights of Man, that if we were ourselves to be recalled to existence, instead of being replaced by our posterity, we should not have the right of depriving ourselves beforehand of those *Rights* which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by

what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights those children who will soon be men? Why are we not struck with the injustice which we perpetrate on our descendants, by endeavouring to transmit them as a vile herd, to masters whose vices are all that can be foreseen.

Whenever the *French Constitution* shall be rendered conformable to its *Declaration of Rights*, we shall then be enabled to give to FRANCE; and with justice, the appellation of a *civic Empire*; for its government will be the empire of Laws founded on the great republican principles of *Elective Representation*, and the *Rights of Man*—But Monarchy and Hereditary Succession are incompatible with the *basis* of its constitution.

I hope that I have at present sufficiently proved to you that I am a good Republican; and I have such a confidence in the truth of these principles, that I doubt not they will soon be as universal in *France* as in *America*. The pride of human nature will assist their evidence, will contribute to their establishment, and Men will be ashamed of Monarchy.

I am, with respect,

Gentlemen,

Your friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

L E T T E R,

TO THE

A B B E S Y E Y E S.

SIR,

Paris, 8th July, 1791.

“AT the moment of my departure for England, I read, in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge on the subject of Government, and offer to defend what is called the *Monarchical opinion* against the Republican system.

“I accept of your challenge with pleasure; and I place such a confidence in the superiority of the Republican system over that nullity of system, called *Monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

“The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candour in the course of this discussion; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me premise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule as they deserve, Monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

“By Republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a go-

vernment founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles to which several parts of the French Constitution arise in contradiction. The Declarations of the Rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions; and this is the Republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called *Monarchy* and *Aristocracy*.

“I see with pleasure, that in respect to one point, we are already agreed; and *that is the extreme danger of a Civil List of thirty millions*. I can discover no reason why one of the parts of the government should be supported with so extravagant a profusion, whilst the other scarcely receives what is sufficient for its common wants.

“This dangerous and dishonourable disproportion, at once supplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this point, between the legislative and the executive part of our government; but the first is much better attended to than it is in France.*

* A Deputy to the Congress receives about a guinea and a half daily; and provisions are cheaper in America than in France.

"In whatsoever manner, Sir, I may treat the subject of which you have proposed the investigation, I hope, that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the highest esteem. I must also add, that I am not the personal enemy of Kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartily wishes than myself to see them all in the happy and honourable state of private individuals; but, I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called Monarchy; and I am such by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my at-

tachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myself for the dignity and the honour of the human race; by the disgust which I experience, when I observed men directed by children, and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that Monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast; and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which Monarchy has crushed mankind: in short, it is against all the Hell of Monarchy that I have declared war.

(Signed)

THOMAS PAINE."

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

I PRESENT you a small Treatise in defence of those Principles of Freedom which your exemplary Virtue hath so eminently contributed to establish. --- That the Rights of Man may become as universal as your Benevolence can wish, and that you may enjoy the Happiness of seeing the New World regenerate the Old, is the Prayer of,

SIR,

Your much obliged, and

Obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

GEORGE W. BISHOP

THE BISHOP COLLECTION

I have just received from you a book

which you have been so good as to send me

and I am very much obliged to you for it

and I am sure it will be very useful to me

and I am sure you will be very glad to hear of it

and I am sure you will be very glad to hear of it

Yours

Wm. B. Smith

President of the Board

THOMAS BISHOP

8

P A I N E ' s W O R K S .

R I G H T S o f M A N , &c.

AMONG the incivilities by which nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution is an extraordinary instance. Neither the people of France, nor the National Assembly, were troubling themselves about the affairs of England, or the English Parliament; and why Mr. Burke should commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the score of manners, nor justified on that of policy.

There is scarcely an epithet of abuse to be found in the English language with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French nation and the National Assembly. Every thing which rancour, prejudice, ignorance or knowledge could suggest, are poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the strain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have wrote on to as many thousands. When the tongue or the pen is let loose in a phrenzy of passion, it is the man, and not the subject, that becomes exhausted.

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been mistaken and disappointed in the opini-

ons he had formed of the affairs of France; but such is the ingenuity of his hope, or the malignancy of his despair, that it furnishes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impossible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be any revolution in France. His opinion then was, that the French had neither spirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to support it; and now that there is one, he seeks an escape by condemning it.

Not sufficiently content with abusing the National Assembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abusing Dr. Price, (one of the best-hearted men that lives), and the two societies in England known by the name of the Revolution and the Constitutional Societies.

Dr. Price had preached a sermon on the 4th of November, 1789, being the anniversary of what is called in England the Revolution which took place in 1688. Mr. Burke, speaking of this sermon, says, ' The Political Divine proceeds dogmatically to assert, that, by the principles of the Revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights :

- ' 1. To chuse our own governors.
- ' 2. To cashier them for misconduct.
- ' 3. To frame a government for ourselves.'

Dr. Price does not say that the right to do these things exists in this or in that person, or in this or in that description of persons, but that it exists in the *whole*; that it is a right resident in the nation—Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that such a right exists in the nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exists any where; and what is still more strange and marvellous, he says, 'that the people of England utterly disclaim such a right, and that they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes.' That men should take up arms, and spend their lives and fortunes, *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain they have *not* rights, is an entire new species of discovery, and suited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no such rights, and that such rights do not now exist in the nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the same marvellous and monstrous kind with what he has already said; for his arguments are, that the persons, or the generation of persons, in whom they did exist, are dead, and with them the right is dead also. To prove this he quotes a declaration made by parliament about a hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in these words:—"The Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, do, in the name of the people aforesaid (meaning the people of England then living)—most

"humbly and faithfully *submit* themselves, their *heirs* and *posterity*, for EVER." He also quotes a clause of another act of parliament made in the same reign, the terms of which, he says, "bind us—(meaning the people of that day)—"our *heirs* and "our *posterity*, to *them*, their *heirs* and *posterity*, to the end of time."

Mr. Burke conceives his point sufficiently established by producing those clauses, which he enforces by saying that they exclude the right of the nation for *ever*: and not yet content with making such declarations, repeated over and over again, he further says, 'that if the people of England possessed such a right before the Revolution,' (which he acknowledges to have been the case, not only in England, but throughout Europe, at an early period) 'yet that the *English nation* did, at the time of the Revolution, most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for *all their posterity, for ever*.'

As Mr. Burke occasionally applies the poison drawn from his horrid principles (if it is not a prophanation to call them by the name of principles) not only to the English nation, but to the French Revolution and the National Assembly, and charges that august, illuminated and illuminating body of men with the epithet of *usurpers*, I shall, *sans cérémonie*, place another system of principles in opposition to his.

The English Parliament of 1688 did a certain thing, which, for themselves and their constituents, they had a right to do, and which it appeared right should be done: but, in addition to this right, which they possessed by delegation, *they set up*

another right by assumption, that of binding and controuling posterity to the end of time. The case, therefore, divides itself into two parts; the right which they possessed by delegation, and the right which they set up by assumption. The first is admitted; but, with respect to the second, I reply—

There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controuling posterity to the “*end of time*,” or of commanding for ever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it: and therefore all such clauses, acts or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themselves null and void. — Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself, *in all cases*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow. The parliament of the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to dispose of the people of the present day, or to bind or to controul them *in any shape whatever*, than the parliament or the people of the present day have to dispose of, bind or controul those who are to live a hundred or a thousand years hence. Every generation is and must be competent to all the purposes which its occasions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that

are to be accommodated.—When man ceases to be, his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.

I am not contending for, nor against, any form of government, nor for, nor against, any party here or elsewhere. That which a whole nation chooses to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke says, No. Where then *does* the right exist? I am contending for the rights of the *living*, and against their being willed away, and controuled and contracted for, by the manuscript assumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living. There was a time when kings disposed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and consigned the people, like beasts of the field, to whatever successor they appointed. This is now so exploded as scarcely to be remembered, and so monstrous as hardly to be believed: But the parliamentary clauses upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the same nature.

The laws of every country must be analogous to some common principle. In England, no parent or master, nor all the authority of parliament, omnipotent as it has called itself, can bind or controul the personal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years: On what ground of right then could the parliament of 1688, or any other parliament, bind all posterity for ever?

Those who have quitted the world, and those who are not yet arrived at it, are as remote from each other as the utmost stretch of mortal imagination can conceive. What possible obligation then can exist between them, what rule or principle can be laid down, that two non-entities, the one out of existence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, that the one should controul the other to the end of time?

In England, it is said that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their consent. But who authorized, and who could authorize the parliament of 1688, to controul and take away the freedom of posterity, and limit and confine their rights of acting in certain cases for ever, who were not in existence to give or to withhold their consent?

A greater absurdity cannot present itself to the understanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men, who existed a hundred years ago, made a law, and that there does not now exist in the nation, nor ever will, nor ever can, a power to alter it. Under how many subtillties, or absurdities, has the divine right to govern been imposed on the credulity of mankind! Mr. Burke has discovered a new one, and he has shortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible parliament of former days, and he produces what it has done, as of divine authority: for that power must certainly be more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr. Burke has done some service, not to his cause, but to his country, by bringing those clauses into public view. They serve to demonstrate how necessary it is at all times to watch against the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to excess. It is somewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of setting up power by *assumption*, should be re-acted, under another shape and form, by the parliament that expelled him. It shews, that the rights of man were but imperfectly understood at the Revolution; for certain it is, that the right which that parliament set up by *assumption* (for by delegation it had it not, and could not have it, because none could give it) over the persons and freedom of posterity for ever, was of the same tyrannical unfounded kind, which James attempted to set up over the parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled. The only difference is, (for in principle they differ not) that the one was an usurper over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as the one has no better authority to stand upon than the other, both of them must be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what, or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind posterity for ever? He has produced his clauses; but he must produce also his proofs, that such a right existed, and shew how it existed. If it ever existed, it must now exist; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he conti-

nues to be born. But Mr. Burke has set up a sort of political Adam, in whom all posterity are bound for ever; he must therefore prove that his Adam possessed such a power or such a right.

The weaker any cord is, the less will it bear to be stretched, and the worse is the policy to stretch it, unless it is intended to break it. Had a person contemplated the overthrow of Mr. Burke's position, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done. He would have magnified the authorities, on purpose to have called the *right* of them into question; and the instant the question of right was started, the authorities must have been given up.

It requires but a very small glance of thought to perceive, that altho' laws made in one generation often continue in force through succeeding generations, yet that they continue to derive their force from the consent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not because it *cannot* be repealed, but because it *is not* repealed; and the non-repealing passes for consent.

But Mr. Burke's clauses have not even this qualification in their favour. They become null, by attempting to become immortal. The nature of them precludes consent. They destroy the right which they *might* have, by grounding it on a right which they *cannot* have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of parliament. The parliament of 1688 might as well have passed an act to have authorised themselves to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All therefore that can be said of them is, that they are a formality

of words, of as much import, as if those who used them had addressed a congratulation to themselves, and, in the oriental stile of antiquity, had said, O Parliament, live for ever!

The circumstances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change also; and as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that has any right in it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient another.—In such cases, Who is to decide; the living, or the dead?

As almost one hundred pages of Mr. Burke's book are employed upon these clauses, it will consequently follow, that if the clauses themselves, so far as they set up an *assumed, usurped* dominion over posterity for ever, are authoritative, and in their nature null and void, that all his voluminous inferences and declamations drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void also: and on this ground I rest the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as instructions to the French nation; but if I may permit myself the use of an extravagant metaphor, suited to the extravagance of the case, It is darkness attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there is accidentally before me some proposals for a declaration of rights by the Marquis de la Fayette (I ask his pardon for using his former address, and do it only for distinction's sake) to the National Assembly on the 11th of July, 1789, three days before the taking of the Bastille; and I cannot

but be struck how opposite the sources are from which that Gentleman and Mr. Burke draw their principles. Instead of referring to musty records and mouldy parchments to prove that the rights of the living are lost, "renounced and abdicated for ever," by those who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically says, "Call to mind the sentiments which Nature has engraved in the heart of every citizen, and which take a new force when they are solemnly recognized by all:—For a nation to love liberty, it is sufficient that she knows it; and to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it." How dry, barren, and obscure, is the source from which Mr. Burke labours; and how ineffectual, though gay with flowers, are all his declamation and his argument, compared with these clear, concise, and soul-animating sentiments! Few and short as they are, they lead to a vast field of generous and manly thinking, and do not finish, like Mr. Burke's periods, with music in the ear, and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced the mention of M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote respecting his farewell address to the Congress of America in 1783, and which occurred fresh to my mind when I saw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French Revolution.—M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her service to the end.—His conduct through the whole of that enterprise is one of the most extraordinary that is to be found in the

history of a young man, scarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of sensual pleasure, and with the means of enjoying it, how few are there to be found who would exchange such a scene for the woods and wilderness of America, and pass the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardship! but such is the fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he presented himself to Congress, and contemplating in his affectionate farewell, the revolution he had seen, expressed himself in these words: "*May this great monument, raised to Liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!*"—When this address came to the hands of Doctor Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to Count Vergennes to have it inserted in the French Gazette, but never could obtain his consent. The fact was, that Count Vergennes was an aristocratical despot at home, and dreaded the example of the American revolution in France, as certain other persons now dread the example of the French revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear (for in this light his book must be considered) runs parallel with Count Vergennes' refusal. But to return more particularly to his work.—

"We have seen (says Mr. Burke) the French rebel against a mild and lawful Monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant."—This is one, among a thousand other instances, in which Mr. Burke shews

that he is ignorant of the springs and principles of the French revolution.

It was not against Louis XVI. but against the despotic principles of the government, that the nation revolted. These principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleansed, by any thing short of a complete and universal revolution. When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart and soul should go into the measure, or not attempt it. That crisis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigour, or not at all. The King was known to be the friend of the nation, and this circumstance was favourable to the enterprise. Perhaps no man, bred up in the stile of an absolute King, ever possessed a heart so little disposed to the exercise of that species of power as the present King of France. But the principles of the government itself still remained the same. The Monarch and the Monarchy were distinct and separate things; and it was against the established despotism of the latter, and not against the person or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried.

Mr. Burke does not attend to the distinction between *men* and *principles*, and therefore he does not see that a revolt may take place against the despotism of the latter, while there lies no charge of despotism against the former.

The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary despotism of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under that hereditary despotism, were still liable to be revived in the hands of a successor. It was not the respite of a reign that would satisfy France, enlightened as she was then become. A casual discontinuance of the *practice* of despotism, is not a discontinuance of its *principles*; the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in immediate possession of the power; the latter, on the virtue and fortitude of the nation. In the case of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was against the personal despotism of men; whereas in France it was against the hereditary despotism of the established government. But men who can consign over the rights of posterity for ever on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vast for their views to explore, and proceeds with a mightiness of reason they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be considered. When despotism has established itself for ages in a country, as in France, it is not in the person of the King only that it resides. It has the appearance of being so in show, and in nominal authority; but it is not so in practice, and in fact. It has its standard every where. Every office and department has its despotism, founded upon custom and usage. Every place its Bastille, and every Bastille its despot. The original he-

editary despotism resident in the person of the King, divides and subdivides itself into a thousand shapes and forms, till at last the whole of it is acted by deputation. This was the case in France; and against this species of despotism, proceeding on through an endless labyrinth of office till the source of it is scarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redress. It strengthens itself by assuming the appearance of duty, and tyrannises under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in from the nature of her government, he will see other causes for revolt than those which immediately connect themselves with the person or character of Louis XVI.—There were, if I may so express it, a thousand despotisms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary despotism of the monarchy, and became so rooted as to be in a great measure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalship* of despotism; besides the feudal despotism operating locally, and the ministerial despotism operating every where. But Mr. Burke, considering the King as the only possible object of a revolt, speaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that passed must be known to its commanding officer, and no oppression could be acted but what he could immediately controul. Mr. Burke might have been in the Bastile his whole life, as well under Louis XVI. as Louis XIV. and neither the one nor the other have known that such a man as Mr. Burke existed. The despotic principles of the government were the same in both reigns, though

the dispositions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke considers as a reproach on the French revolution (that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding ones), is one of the highest honours. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries, have been excited by personal hatred. The rage was against the man, and he became the victim. But, in the instance of France, we see a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and distinguishing from the beginning between persons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is contemplating governments. “Ten years ago (says he) I could have felicitated France on her having a government, without enquiring what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered.” Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happiness of the human race?—On this ground, Mr. Burke must compliment every government in the world, while the victims who suffer under them, whether sold into slavery, or tortured out of existence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this abominable depravity, he is disqualified to judge between them.—Thus much for his opinion as to the occasions of the French Revolution. I now proceed to other considerations.

I know a place in America called Point-no-Point; because as you pro-

ceed along the shore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes and presents itself at a distance a-head; and when you have got as far as you can go, there is no point at all. Just thus it is with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty-five pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points he wishes to establish may be inferred from what he abuses, it is in his paradoxes that we must look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect that he is writing History, and not *Plays*; and his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned exclamation.

When we see a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that "*The age of chivalry is gone!* that *The glory of Europe is extinguished for ever!* that *The unbought grace of life, (if any one knows what it is) the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiments and heroic enterprise is gone!*" and all this because the Quixote age of chivalry nonsense is gone. What opinion can we form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of wind-mills,

and his sorrows are, that there are no Quixotes to attack them. But if the age of aristocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall, and they had originally some connection, Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the Order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming—" *Othello's occupation's gone!*"

Notwithstanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French Revolution is compared with that of other countries, the astonishment will be, that it is marked with so few sacrifices; but this astonishment will cease when we reflect that it was *principles*, and not *persons*, that were the meditated objects of destruction. The mind of the nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than what the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher conquest than could be produced by the downfall of an enemy. Among the few who fell, there did not appear to be any that were intentionally singled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumstances of the moment, and were not pursued with that long cold-blooded, unabated revenge which pursued the unfortunate Scotch in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke's book I do not observe that the Bastile is mentioned more than once, and that with a kind of implication as if he were sorry it is pulled down, and wished it were built up again. "We have rebuilt Newgate (says he), and tenanted the mansion; and we have prisons almost as strong as the Bastile for those who dare to libel the Queens of France*." As to

* Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke's pamphlet, in which the name of the Bastile is mentioned, but in the same manner. In the one he introduces it in a sort of obscure question, and asks—"Will any ministers who now serve

what a madman, like the person called Lord George Gordon, might say, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a prison, it is unworthy a rational consideration. It was a madman that libelled—and that is sufficient apology; and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing that was wished for: But certain it is that Mr. Burke, who does not call himself a madman, whatever other people may do, has libelled, in the most unprovoked manner, and in the grossest stile of the most vulgar abuse, the whole representative authority of France, and yet Mr. Burke takes his seat in the British House of Commons! From his violence and his grief, his silence on some points, and his excess on others, it is difficult not to believe that Mr. Burke is sorry, extremely sorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the Pope, and the Bastile, are pulled down.

Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those who lingered out the most wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he is to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching upon his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accus-

tomed to kiss the aristocratical hand that hath purloined him from himself, he degenerates into a composition of art, and the genuine soul of nature forsakes him. His hero or his heroine must be a tragedy-victim expiring in show, and not the real prisoner of misery, sliding into death in the silence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has passed over the whole transaction of the Bastile (and his silence is not in his favour), and has entertained his readers with reflections on supposed facts distorted into real falsehoods, I will give, since he has not, some account of the circumstances which preceded that transaction. They will serve to shew, that less mischief could scarcely have accompanied such an event, when considered with the treacherous and hostile aggravations of the enemies of the Revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itself a more tremendous scene than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Bastile, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the possibility of its quieting so soon. At a distance this transaction has appeared only as an act of heroism, standing on itself; and the close political connection it had with the Revolution is lost in the brilliancy of the achievement. But we are to consider it as the strength of the parties, brought man to man, and contending for the issue. The Bastile was to be either the prize or the prison of the assailants. The

serve such a king, with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day, *in his name*, they had committed to the Bastile?" In the other, the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French guards who assisted in demolishing it.—"They have not (says he) forgot the taking the king's castles at Paris."—This is Mr. Burke, who pretends to write on constitutional freedom.

downfall of it included the idea of the downfall of Despotism; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Castle and Giant Despair.

The National Assembly, before and at the time of taking the Bastille, was sitting at Versailles, twelve miles distant from Paris. About a week before the rising of the Parisians, and their taking the Bastille, it was discovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the Count d'Artois, the King's youngest brother, for demolishing the National Assembly, seizing its members, and thereby crushing, by a *coup de main*, all hopes and prospects of forming a free government. For the sake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not succeed. Examples are not wanting to shew how dreadfully vindictive and cruel are all old governments, when they are successful against what they call a revolt.

This plan must have been some time in contemplation; because, in order to carry it into execution, it was necessary to collect a large military force round Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the National Assembly at Versailles. The troops destined for this service were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France, and who, for this particular purpose, were drawn from the distant provinces where they were then stationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thousand, it was judged time to put the plan into execution. The ministry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the Revolution, were instantly dismissed, and a new minis-

try formed of those who had concerted the project; among whom was Count de Broglie, and to his share was given the command of those troops. The character of this man, as described to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of "an high-flying aristocrat, cool, and "capable of every mischief."

While these matters were agitating, the National Assembly stood in the most perilous and critical situation that a body of men can be supposed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wishes of their country on their side, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglie surrounded the hall where the assembly sat, ready, at the word of command, to seize their persons, as had been done the year before to the parliament of Paris. Had the National Assembly deserted their trust, or had they exhibited signs of weakness or fear, their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depressed. When the situation they stood in, the cause they were engaged in, and the crisis then ready to burst which should determine their personal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe, are taken into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependence, can avoid interesting itself in their success.

The archbishop of Vienne was at this time president of the National Assembly; a person too old to undergo the scene that a few days, or a few hours, might bring forth. A

man of more activity and bolder fortitude, was necessary; and the National Assembly chose (under the form of a vice-president; for the presidency still resided in the archbishop) M. de la Fayette; and this is the only instance of a vice-president being chosen. It was at the moment that this storm was pending (July 11.) that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M. de la Fayette, and is the same which is alluded to in page 103. It was hastily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extensive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the National Assembly.—The particular reason for bringing it forward at this moment, (M. de la Fayette has since informed me) was, that if the National Assembly should fall in the threatened destruction that then surrounded it, some traces of its principles might have the chance of surviving the wreck.

Every thing now was drawing to a crisis. The event was freedom or slavery. On one side, an army of nearly thirty thousand men; on the other, an unarmed body of citizens; for the citizens of Paris, on whom the National Assembly must then immediately depend, were as unarmed and as undisciplined as the citizens of London are now.—The French guards had given strong symptoms of their being attached to the national cause; but their numbers were small, not a tenth part of the force that Broglie commanded, and their officers were in the interest of Broglie.

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new ministry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Bastille was taken the 14th of July: the point of time I am now speaking to is the 12th. Immediately on the

news of the change of ministry reaching Paris in the afternoon, all the play-houses, and places of entertainment, shops and houses, were shut up. The change of ministry was considered as the prelude of hostilities, and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance towards the city. The Prince de Lambesc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the Place of Lewis XV. which connects itself with some of the streets. In his march, he insulted and struck an old man with his sword. The French are remarkable for their respect to old age, and the insolence with which it appeared to be done uniting with the general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect, and a cry of *To arms! to arms!* spread itself in a moment over the city.

Arms they had none, nor scarcely any who knew the use of them: but desperate resolution, when every hope is at stake, supplies, for a while, the want of arms. Near where the Prince de Lambesc was drawn up, were large piles of stones collected for building the new bridge, and with these the people attacked the cavalry.—A party of the French guards upon hearing the firing, rushed from their quarters and joined the people: and night coming on the cavalry retreated.

The streets of Paris, being narrow, are favourable for defence; and the loftiness of the houses, consisting of many stories, from which great annoyance might be given, secured them against nocturnal enterprises; and the night was spent in providing themselves with every sort of weapon they could make or procure.—Guns, swords, blacksmiths hammers, car-

penters axes, iron crows, pikes, halberds, pitchforks, spits, clubs, &c. &c.

The incredible numbers with which they assembled the next morning, and the still more incredible resolution they exhibited, embarrassed and astonished their enemies. Little did the new ministry expect such a salute. Accustomed to slavery themselves, they had no idea that Liberty was capable of such inspiration, or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thousand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans and arranging themselves into the best order which such an instantaneous movement could afford. Broglie continued lying round the city, but made no farther advances this day, and the succeeding night passed with as much tranquillity as such a scene could possibly produce.

But defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cause at stake on which depended their freedom or their slavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of one made on the National Assembly; and in such a situation, the most prompt measures are sometimes the best. The object that now presented itself was the Bastille; and the eclat of carrying such a fortress in the face of such an army, could not fail to strike a terror into the new ministry, who had scarcely yet had time to meet. By some intercepted correspondence this morning, it was discovered, that the Mayor of Paris, M. De Flelles, who appeared to be in their interest, was betraying them; and from this discovery, there remained no doubt that Broglie

would reinforce the Bastille the ensuing evening. It was therefore necessary to attack it that day; but before this could be done, it was first necessary to procure a better supply of arms than they were then possessed of.

There was adjoining to the city, a large magazine of arms deposited at the Hospital of the Invalids, which the citizens summoned to surrender; and as the place was not defensible, nor attempted much defence, they soon succeeded. Thus supplied, they marched to attack the Bastille; a vast mixed multitude of all ages, and of all degrees, and armed with all sorts of weapons. Imagination would fail in describing to itself the appearance of such a procession, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours or a few minutes might produce. What plans the ministry was forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as what the citizens were doing was unknown to them; and what movements Broglie might make for the support or relief of the place, were to the citizens equally as unknown. All was mystery and hazard.

That the Bastille was attacked with an enthusiasm of heroism, such only as the highest animation of liberty could inspire, and carried in the space of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully possessed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack; but bringing into view the conspiracy against the nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Bastille. The prison to which the new ministry were dooming the National Assembly, in addition to its being the high altar and castle of despotism, became the proper object to

begin with. This enterprize broke up the new ministry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglie dispersed, and himself fled also.

Mr. Burke has spoken a great deal about plots, but he has never once spoken of this plot against the National Assembly, and the liberties of the nation; and that he might not, he has passed over all the circumstances that might throw it in his way. The exiles who have fled from France, whose case he so much interests himself in, and from whom he has had his lesson, fled in consequence of the miscarriage of this plot. No plot was formed against them; it were they who were plotting against others: and those who fell, met, not unjustly, the punishment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke say, that if this plot, contrived with the subtlety of an ambuscade, had succeeded, the successful party would have restrained their wrath so soon? Let the history of all old governments answer the question.

Whom has the National Assembly brought to the scaffold?—None. They were themselves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated; why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers and characters are confounded, and delivering themselves, by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are fore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy, or the palsy of insensibility, to

be looked for? Mr. Burke exclaims against outrage, yet the greatest is that which himself has committed. His book is a volume of outrage, not apologized for by the impulse of a moment, but cherished through a space of ten months; yet Mr. Burke had no provocation, no life, no interest at stake.

More citizens fell in this struggle than of their opponents: but four or five persons were seized by the populace and instantly put to death; the Governor of the Bastille, and the Mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new ministry, and Berthier his son-in-law, who had accepted the office of intendant of Paris. Their heads were stuck upon spikes, and carried about the city: and it is upon this mode of punishment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic scenes. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

They learn it from the governments they live under, and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about upon spikes at Paris: yet this was done by the English government. It may perhaps be said, that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead, but it signifies much to the living; it either tortures the feelings, or hardens their hearts; and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach government humanity. It is

their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. In England, the punishment in certain cases, is by *hanging, drawing, and quartering*; the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France, under the former government, the punishments were not less barbarous. Who does not remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horses? The effect of those cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace, is to destroy tenderness, or excite revenge; and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror, instead of reason, they become precedents. It is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel they are the subjects aimed at; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror they have been instructed to practise.

There are in all European countries, a large class of people of that description which in England are called the "*mob*." Of this class were those who committed the burnings and devastations in London 1780, and of this class were those who carried the heads upon spikes in Paris. Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country, and sent to Paris to undergo their examination at the Hotel de Ville; for the National Assembly, immediately on the new ministry coming into office, passed a decree, which they communicated to the King and Cabinet, that they (the National Assembly) would hold the ministry, of which Foulon was one, responsible for the measures they were advising and pursuing; but the mob, incensed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors before they were carried to the Hotel de Ville, and exe-

cuted them on the spot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind on a whole people? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or those in Ireland on all his country.

But every thing we see or hear offensive to our feelings, and derogatory to the human character, should lead to other reflections than those of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have some claim to our consideration. How then is it that such vast classes of mankind as are distinguished by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are so numerous in all old countries? The instant we ask ourselves this question, reflection feels an answer. They arise, as an unavoidable consequence, out of the ill construction of all the old governments in Europe, England included with the rest. It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly abased, till the whole is out of nature. A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the back-ground of the human picture, to bring forward with greater glare, the puppet show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a Revolution, those men are rather the followers of the *camp* than of the *standard* of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and I then ask him, if they do not establish the certainty of what I here lay down? Admitting them to be true, they shew the necessity of the French Revolution, as much as one thing he could have asserted. These outrages were not the effect of the principles of the Revolution, but of the degraded mind that existed before the Revolution, and which the Revo-

tion is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cause, and take the reproach of them to your own side.

It is to the honour of the National Assembly, and the city of Paris, that during such a tremendous scene of arms and confusion, beyond the controul of all authority, that they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to restrain so much. Never were more pains taken to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them see that their interest consisted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than what have been displayed in the Revolution of France.—I now proceed to make some remarks on Mr. Burke's account of the expedition to Versailles, October the 5th and 6th.

I cannot consider Mr. Burke's book in scarcely any other light than a dramatic performance; and he must, I think, have considered it in the same light himself, by the poetical liberties he has taken of omitting some facts, distorting others, and making the whole machinery bend to produce a stage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Versailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which as causes are known to be true; every thing beyond these is conjecture even in Paris; and he then works up a tale accommodated to his own passions and prejudices.

It is to be observed throughout Mr. Burke's book that he never speaks of plots *against* the Revolution; and it is from those plots that all the mischiefs have arisen. It suits his purpose to exhibit the consequences without their causes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do so. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their suffer-

ings, the stage effect would sometimes be lost, and the audience would be inclined to approve where it was intended they should commiserate.

After all the investigations that have been made into this intricate affair, (the expedition to Versailles), it still remains enveloped in all that kind of mystery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of awkward circumstances, than from fixed design. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the case in revolutions, there is a reciprocal suspicion, and a disposition to misinterpret each other; and even parties directly opposite in principle, will sometimes concur in pushing forward the same movement with very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different consequences. A great deal of this may be discovered in this embarrassed affair, and yet the issue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known are, that considerable uneasiness was at this time excited at Paris, by the delay of the King in not sanctioning and forwarding the decrees of the National Assembly, particularly that of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and the decrees of the *fourth of August*, which contained the foundation principles on which the constitution was to be erected. The kindest and perhaps the fairest conjecture upon this matter is, that some of the ministers intended to make remarks and observations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally sanctioned and sent to the provinces; but be this as it may, the enemies of the Revolution derived hopes from the delay, and the friends of the Revolution, uneasiness.

During this state of suspense, the *Gardes du Corps*, which was composed as such regiments generally are, of persons much connected with the Court, gave an entertainment at Versailles (Oct. 1,) to some foreign regiments then arrived; and when the entertainment was at the height, on a signal given, the *Gardes du Corps* tore the national cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpose. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they must expect consequences. But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of sight. He begins his account by saying, "History will record, " that on the morning of the 6th of " October, 1789, the King and " Queen of France, after a day of " confusion, alarm, dismay, and " slaughter, lay down, under the " pledged security of public faith, " to indulge nature in a few hours " of respite, and troubled melan- " choly repose." This is neither the sober style of history, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be guessed at, and mistaken. One would at least think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of those whom Mr. Burke involves in his censures. By his keeping the *Gardes du Corps* out of sight, Mr. Burke has afforded himself the dramatic licence of putting the King and Queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition was against them. —But to return to my account—

This conduct of the *Gardes du Corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Parisians.

The colours of the cause, and the cause itself, were become too united to mistake the intention of the insult, and the Parisians were determined to call the *Gardes du Corps* to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of assassination in marching in the face of day to demand satisfaction, if such a phrase may be used, of a body of armed men, who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumstance which serves to throw this affair into embarrassment is, that the enemies of the Revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hoped to prevent a civil war by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of those opposed to the Revolution, rested in making the King of their party, and getting him from Versailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and set up a standard. We have therefore two different objects presenting themselves at the same time, and be accomplished by the same means: the one, to chastise the *Gardes du Corps*, which was the object of the Parisians; the other, to render the confusion of such a scene an inducement to the King to set off for Metz.

On the 5th of October, a very numerous body of women, and men in the disguise of women, collected round the Hotel de Ville, or town-hall at Paris, and set off for Versailles. Their professed object was the *Gardes du Corps*; but prudent men readily recollect that mischief is easier begun than ended; and this impressed itself with the more force, from the suspicions already stated, and the irregularity of such a cavalcade. As soon therefore as a sufficient force could be collected, M. de

la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris, set off after them at the head of twenty thousand of the Paris militia. The revolution could derive no benefit from confusion, and its opposers might. By an amiable and spirited manner of address he had hitherto been fortunate in calming disquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily successful; to frustrate, therefore, the hopes of those who might seek to improve this scene into a sort of justifiable necessity for the King's quitting Versailles and withdrawing to Metz, and to prevent at the same time the consequences that might ensue between the *Gardes du Corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expresses to the King that he was on his march to Versailles, at the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpose of peace and protection, expressing at the same time the necessity of restraining the *Gardes du Corps* from firing upon the people*.

He arrived at Versailles between ten and eleven at night. The *Gardes du Corps* were drawn up, and the people had arrived some time before, but every thing had remained suspended. Wisdom and policy now consisted in changing a scene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the King, to remove the uneasiness which had arisen from the delay already stated, sent for the President of the National Assembly, and signed the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and such other parts of the constitution as were in readiness.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be composed, and a general congratulation took place. At the beat of drum a proclamation was made, that the citizens of Versailles would give the hospitality of their houses to their fellow-citizens of Paris. Those who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the streets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the King and Queen retired.

In this state matters passed till the break of day, when a fresh disturbance arose from the censurable conduct of some of both parties, for such characters there will be in all such scenes. One of the *Gardes du Corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who had remained during the night in the streets accosted him with reviling and provocative language. Instead of retiring, as in such a case prudence would have dictated, he presented his musket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people rushed into the palace in quest of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *Gardes du Corps* within the palace, and pursued them throughout the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the King. On this tumult, not the Queen only, as Mr. Burke has represented it, but every person in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M. de la Fayette had a second time to interpose between the parties, the event of which was, that the *Gardes du Corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended as by oblivion,

* I am warranted in asserting this, as I had it personally from M. De la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendship for fourteen years.

after the loss of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confusion was acting, the King and Queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for safety's sake, as Mr. Burke insinuates. Matters being thus appeased, and tranquillity restored, a general acclamation broke forth, of *Le Roi à Paris—Le Roi à Paris*—The King to Paris. It was the shout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the King. By this measure, all future projects of trepanning the King to Metz, and setting up the standard of opposition to the constitution, were prevented, and the suspicions extinguished. The King and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival by M. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke, who throughout his book confounds things, persons, and principles, has in his remarks on M. Bailly's address, confounded time also. He censures M. Bailly for calling it "*un bon jour*," a good day. Mr. Burke should have informed himself, that this scene took up the space of two days, the day on which it began with every appearance of danger and mischief, and the day on which it terminated without the mischiefs, that threatened; and that it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailly alludes, and to the arrival of the King at Paris. Not less than three hundred thousand persons arranged themselves in the procession from Versailles to Paris, and not an act of molestation

was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tolendal, a deserter from the National Assembly, says, that on entering Paris, the people shouted, "*Tous les évêques à la lanterne.*" All bishops to be hanged at the lanthorn or lamp-posts.—It is surprising that nobody should hear this but Lally Tolendal, and that nobody should believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the least connection with any part of the transaction, and is totally foreign to every circumstance of it. The bishops have never been introduced before into any scene of Mr. Burke's drama; Why then are they, all at once, and altogether, *tout à coup et tous ensemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his bishops and his lanthorn like figures in a magic lanthorn, and raises his scenes by contrast instead of connection. But it serves to shew, with the rest of his book, what little credit ought to be given, where even probability is set at defiance, for the purpose of defaming: and with this reflection, instead of a soliloquy in praise of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I close the account of the expedition to Versailles.*

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathless wilderness of rhapsodies, and a sort of descant upon governments, in which he asserts whatever he pleases, on the presumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reasons for so doing.

Before any thing can be reasoned upon to a conclusion, certain facts,

* An account of the expedition to Versailles may be seen in No. 13, of the *Revelation de Paris*, containing the events from the 3d to the 10th October, 1789.

principles, or data, to reason from, must be established, admitted, or denied. Mr. Burke, with his usual outrage, abuses the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, published by the National Assembly of France as the basis on which the constitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred sheets of paper about the rights of man."—Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that *man* has any rights? If he does, then he must mean that there are no such things as rights any where, and that he has none himself; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the question then will be, What are those rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages of an hundred or a thousand years, and produce what was then done as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all. If we travel still farther into antiquity, we will find a direct contrary opinion and practice prevailing; if antiquity is to be authority, a thousand such authorities may be produced, successively contradicting each other: But if we proceed on, we shall at last come out right; we shall come to the time when man came from the hand of his Maker. What was he then? Man. Man was his high and only title, and a higher cannot be given him.—But of titles I shall speak hereafter.

We are now got at the origin of man, and at the origin of his rights. As to the manner in which the world

has been governed from that day to this, it is no farther any concern of ours than to make a proper use of the errors or the improvements which the history of it presents. Those who lived a hundred or a thousand years ago were then moderns as we are now. They had *their* ancients, and those ancients had others, and we also shall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live an hundred or a thousand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of those who lived an hundred or a thousand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving every thing, establish nothing. It is authority against authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man at the creation. Here our enquirers find a resting-place, and our reason finds a home. If a dispute about the rights of man had arose at the distance of an hundred years from the creation, it is to this source of authority that we must now refer.

Though I mean not to touch upon any sectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth observing, that the genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will answer the question. Because there have been an upstart of governments, thrusting themselves between, and presumptuously working to *un-make* man.

If any generation of men ever possessed the right of dictating the mode by which the world should be governed for ever, it was the first generation that existed: and if that generation did not do it, no succeeding generation can shew any autho-

rity for doing it, nor set any up. The illuminating and divine principles of the equal rights of man, (for it has its origin from the Maker of man) relates, not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men succeeding each other. Every generation is equal in rights to the generations which preceded it, by the same rule that every individual is born equal in rights with his cotemporary.

Every history of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in establishing one point, *the unity of man*; by which I mean that man is all of *one degree*, and consequently that all men are born equal, and with equal natural rights, in the same manner as if posterity had been continued by *creation* instead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and consequently, every child born in the world must be considered as deriving its existence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the first man that existed, and his natural right in it is of the same kind.

The Mosaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority, or merely historical, is fully up to this point, *the unity or equality of man*. The expressions admit of no controversy. "And God
" said, Let us make man in our own
" image. In the image of God
" created he him; male and female
" created he them." The distinction of sexes is pointed out, but no other distinction is even implied. If this be not divine authority, it is at least historical authority, and shews

that the equality of man, so far from being a modern doctrine, is the oldest upon record.

It is also to be observed, that all the religions known in the world are founded, so far as they relate to man, on the *unity of man*, as being all of one degree. Whether in heaven or in hell, or in whatever state man may be supposed to exist hereafter, the good and the bad are the only distinctions. Nay, even the laws of governments are obliged to slide into this principle, by making degrees to consist in crimes, and not in persons.

It is one of the greatest of all truths, and of the highest advantage to cultivate. By considering man in this light, and by instructing him to consider himself in this light, it places him in a close connection with all his duties, whether to his Creator, or to the creation, of which he is a part; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or to use a more fashionable phrase, his *birth and family*, that he becomes dissolute. It is not among the least of the evils of the present existing governments in all parts of Europe, that man, considered as man, is thrown back to a vast distance from his Maker, and the artificial chasm filled up by a succession of barriers, or a sort of turnpike gates, through which he has to pass. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has set up between man and his Maker. Putting himself in the character of a herald, he says—"We fear God—with affection to
" *awe* to kings—with affection to
" parliaments—with duty to magistrates—with reverence to priests,
" and with respect to nobility." Mr. Burke has also forgot to put in

"*chivalry*." He has also forgot to put in Peter.

The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike gates, through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and simple, and consists but of two points. His duty to God, which every man must feel; and with respect to his neighbour, to do as he would be done by. If those to whom power is delegated do well, they will be respected: if not, they will be despised; and with regard to those to whom no power is delegated, but who assume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have spoken only (and that but in part) of the natural rights of man. We have now to consider the civil rights of man, and to shew how the one originates out of the other. Man did not enter into society to become *worse* than he was before, nor to have less rights than he had before, but to have those rights better secured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights. But in order to pursue this distinction with more precision, it will be necessary to mark the different qualities of natural and civil rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural rights are those which appertain to man in right of his existence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and also those rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happiness, which are not injurious to the natural rights of others.—Civil rights are those which appertain to man in right of his being a member of society. Every civil right has for its foundation some natural right pre-

existing in the individual, but to which his individual power is not, in all cases, sufficiently competent. Of this kind are all those which relate to security and protection.

From this short review, it will be easy to distinguish between that class of natural rights which man retains after entering into society, and those which he throws into common stock as a member of society.

The natural rights which he retains, are all those in which the *power* to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itself. Among this class, as is before mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: consequently, religion is one of those rights. The natural rights which are retained, are all those in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They answer not his purpose. A man, by natural right, has a right to judge in his own cause; and so far as the right of the mind is concerned, he never surrenders it: But what availeth it him to judge, if he has not power to redress? He therefore deposits this right in the common stock of society, and takes the arm of society, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him nothing. Every man is a proprietor in society, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From those premises, two or three certain conclusions will follow.

First, That every civil right grows out of a natural right; or, in other words, is a natural right exchanged.

Secondly, That civil power, properly considered as such, is made up of the aggregate of that class of the natural rights of man, which becomes

defective in the individual in point of power, and answers not his purpose; but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpose of every one.

Thirdly, That the power produced from the aggregate of natural rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade the natural rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the right itself.

We have now, in a few words, traced man from a natural individual to a member of society, and shewn, or endeavoured to shew, the quality of the natural rights retained, and of those which are exchanged for civil rights. Let us now apply those principles to government.

In casting our eyes over the world, it is extremely easy to distinguish the governments which have arisen out of society, or out of the social compact, from those which have not: but to place this in a clearer light than what a single glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the several sources from which governments have arisen, and on which they have been founded.

They may be all comprehended under three heads. First, Superstition. Secondly, Power. Thirdly, The common interest of society, and the common rights of man.

The first was a government of priestcraft, the second of conquerors, and the third of reason.

When a set of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourse with the Deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back stairs in European courts, the world was completely under the government of superstition. The

oracles were consulted, and whatever they were made to say became the law; and this sort of government lasted as long as this sort of superstition lasted.

After these a race of conquerors arose, whose government like that of William the Conqueror, was founded in power, and the sword assumed the name of a scepter. Governments thus established, last as long as the power to support them lasts; but that they might avail themselves of every engine in their favour, they united fraud to force, and set up an idol which they called *Divine Right*, and which, in imitation of the Pope, who affects to be spiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the Founder of the Christian religion, twisted itself afterwards into an idol of another shape called *Church and State*. The key of St. Peter, and the key of the Treasury, became quartered on one another, and the wondering cheated multitude worshipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of man; when I feel (for Nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honour and happiness of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools, and can scarcely avoid disgust at those who are thus imposed upon.

We have now to review the governments which arise out of society, in contradistinction to those which arose out of superstition and conquest.

It has been thought a considerable advance towards establishing the principles of Freedom, to say, that government is a compact between those who govern, and those who are go-

verned: but this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause; for as man must have existed before governments existed, there necessarily was a time when governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be, that the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government: and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.

To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this, we shall easily discover that governments must have arisen, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no distinction. He investigates nothing to its source, and therefore he confounds every thing: but he has signified his intention of undertaking, at some future opportunity, a comparison between the constitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a subject of controversy by throwing the gauntlet, I take him up on his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing: and I accept it with the more readiness, because it affords me, at the same time, an opportunity of pursuing the subject with respect to government arising out of society.

But it will be first necessary to define what is meant by a *constitution*. It is not sufficient that we adopt the word: we must fix also a standard signification to it.

A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real existence; and

wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none. A constitution is a thing *antecedent* to a government, and a government is only the creature of a constitution. The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting a government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organized, the power it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parliaments, or by what other name such bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of the government shall have; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the complete organization of a civil government, and the principles on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A constitution, therefore, is to a government, what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The court of judicature does not make laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made, and the government is in like manner governed by the constitution.

Can then Mr. Burke produce the English constitution? If he cannot, we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist, and consequently that the people have yet a constitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I presume, deny the position I have already advanced; namely, that governments arise either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. The English government is one of those, which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society,

and consequently it arose over the people; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances since the time of William the Conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore without a constitution.

I readily perceive the reason why Mr. Burke declined going into the comparison between the English and French constitutions, because he could not but perceive, when he sat down to the task, that no such thing as a constitution existed on his side the question. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could say on this subject, and it would have been the best manner in which people could have judged of their separate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth while to write upon? It was the strongest ground he could take, if the advantages were on his side; but the weakest, if they were not; and his declining to take it, is either a sign that he could not possess it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke has said, in a speech last winter in parliament, that when the National Assembly first met in three Orders, (the Tiers Etats, the Clergy, and the Noblesse), that France had then a good constitution. This shews, among numerous other instances, that Mr. Burke does not understand what a constitution is. The persons so met, were not a *constitution*, but a *convention* to make a constitution.

The present National Assembly of France is, strictly speaking, the personal social compact.—The members of it are the delegates of the nation in its *original* character; future

assemblies will be the delegates of the nation in its *organized* character. The authority of the present Assembly is different to what the authority of future Assemblies will be. The authority of the present one is to form a constitution, the authority of future Assemblies will be to legislate according to the principles and forms prescribed in that constitution; and if experience should hereafter shew that alterations, amendments, or additions are necessary, the constitution will point out the mode by which such things shall be done, and not leave it to the discretionary power of the future government.

A government on the principles on which constitutional governments arising out of the society are established, cannot have the right of altering itself. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itself what it pleased; and wherever such a right is set up, it shews there is no constitution. The act by which the English parliament empowered itself to sit seven years, shews there is no constitution in England. It might, by the same self-authority, have set any greater number of years, or for life. The Bill which the present Mr. Pitt brought into parliament some years ago, to reform parliament, was on the same erroneous principle. The right of reform is in the nation in its original character, and the constitutional method would be by a general convention elected for the purpose. There is moreover a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves.

From these preliminaries I proceed to draw some comparisons. I have

already spoken of the declaration of rights; and as I mean to be concise as possible, I shall proceed to other parts of the constitution.

The constitution of France says, that every man who pays a tax of sixty sous *per annum*, (2s. and 6d. English), is an elector—What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the same time more capricious, than what the qualifications of electors are in England? Limited—because not one man in an hundred (I speak much within compass) is admitted to vote: Capricious—because the lowest character that can be supposed to exist, and who has not so much as the visible means of an honest livelihood, is an elector in some places; while in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and with a fair known character, and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, and with a property on that farm to three or four times that amount, is not admitted to be an elector. Every thing is out of nature, as Mr. Burke says on another occasion, in this strange chaos, and all sorts of follies are blended with all sorts of crimes. William the Conqueror and his descendants parcelled out the country in this manner, and bribed one part of it by what they call Charters, to hold the other parts of it the better subjected to their will. This is the reason why so many of those Charters abound in Cornwall. The people were averse to the government established at the conquest, and the towns were garrisoned and bribed to enslave the country. All the old Charters are the badges of this conquest, and it is from this source

that the capriciousness of elections arises.

The French constitution says, that the number of representatives for any place shall be in ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? The county of Yorkshire, which contains near a million of souls, sends two county members; and so does the county of Rutland, which contains not an hundredth part of that number. The town of Old Sarum, which contains not three houses, sends two members; and the town of Manchester, which contains upwards of sixty thousand souls, is not admitted to send any. Is there any principle in these things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom or discover those of wisdom?—No wonder then Mr. Burke has declined the comparison, and endeavoured to lead his readers from the point by a wild unsystematical display of paradoxical rhapsodies.

The French constitution says, that the National Assembly shall be elected every two years.—What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Why, that the nation has no right at all in the case: that the government is perfectly arbitrary, with respect to this point; and he can quote for his authority, the precedent of a former parliament.

The French constitution says, there shall be no game laws; that the farmer on whose lands wild game shall be found (for it is by the produce of those lands they are fed) shall have a right to what he can take. That there shall be no monopolies of any kind—that all trade shall be free, and every man free to follow any

occupation by which he can procure an honest livelihood, and in any place, town or city, throughout the nation. What will Mr. Burke say to this? In England, game is made the property of those at whose expence it is not fed; and with respect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies. Every chartered town is an aristocratical monopoly in itself, and the qualification of electors proceeds out of those chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a constitution?

In these chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country, is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy. An Englishman is not free of his own country: every one of those places presents a barrier in his way, and tells him he is not a freeman—that he has no rights. Within these monopolies, are other monopolies. A city, such for instance as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, the right of electing representatives to parliament is monopolised into about thirty-one persons. And within these monopolies are still others. A man even of the same town, whose parents were not in circumstances to give him an occupation, is debarred, in many cases, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or industry what it may.

Are these things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itself from slavery, like France?—Certainly they are not; and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate those badges of ancient oppression, those traces of

a conquered nation. Had Mr. Burke possessed talents similar to the author “On the Wealth of Nations,” he he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into, and, by assemblage, form a constitution. He would have reasoned from minutiae to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the disorderly cast of his genius, that he is unfitted for the subject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a constitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius constituted—But he must say something.—He has therefore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French constitution. Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the Conqueror from Normandy to England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it destroyed!

The French constitution says, that to preserve the national representation from being corrupt, no member of the National Assembly shall be an officer of the government, a placeman, or a pensioner—What will Mr. Burke place against this? I will whisper his answer: *Loaves and Fishes*. Ah! this government of loaves and fishes has more mischief in it than people have yet reflected on. The National Assembly has made the discovery, and it holds out the example to the world. Had governments agreed to quarrel on purpose to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have succeeded better than they have done.

Every thing in the English government appears to me the reverse of what it ought to be, and of what it is said to be. The parliament, imperfectly and capriciously elected as it is, is nevertheless *supposed* to hold the national purse in *trust* for the nation; but in the manner in which an English parliament is constructed, it is like a man being both mortgager and mortgagee; and in the case of misapplication of trust, it is the criminal sitting in judgment upon himself. If those who vote the supplies are the same persons who receive the supplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of those supplies to those who voted them, it is *themselves accountable to themselves*, and the Comedy of Errors concludes with the Pantomime of HUSH. Neither the ministerial party, nor the opposition, will touch upon this case. The national purse is the common hack which each mounts upon. It is like what the country people call, "Ride and tie—" "You ride a little way, and then "I*."—They order these things better in France.

The French constitution says, that the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expence?

In England, this right is said to reside in a *metaphor*, shewn at the Tower for sixpence or a shilling a piece: so are the lions; and it would be a step nearer to reason to say it resided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a

cap. We can all see the absurdity of worshipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practise in themselves, the absurdities they despise in others?

It may with reason be said, that in the manner the English nation is represented, it signifies not where this right resides, whether, in the crown or in the parliament. War is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of the public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home*: the object of it is, an increase of revenue; and as revenue cannot be increased without taxes, a pretence must be made for expenditures.—In reviewing the history of the English government, its wars and its taxes, a stander-by, not blinded by prejudice, nor warped by interest, would declare, that taxes were not raised to carry on wars, but that wars were raised to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a Member of the House of Commons, is a part of the English Government; and though he professes himself an enemy to war, he abuses the French Constitution, which seeks to explode it. He holds up the English Government as a model, in all its parts, to France; but he should first know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favour of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is just enough to enslave a country by, more productively than by despotism; and that

* It is a practice in some parts of the country, when two travellers have but one horse, which like the national purse will not carry double, that the one mounts and rides two or three miles a-head, and then ties the horse to a gate, and walks on. When the second traveller arrives, he takes the horse, rides on, and passes his companion a mile or two, and ties again; and so on.—*Ride and tie.*

as the real object of despotism is revenue, that a government so formed obtains more than it could either by a direct despotism, or in a full state of freedom, and is, therefore on the ground of interest, opposed to both. They account also for the readiness which always appears in such governments, for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In despotic governments, wars are the effect of pride; but in those governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French Constitution, therefore, to provide against both those evils, has taken away the power of declaring war from kings and ministers, and placed the right where the expence must fall.

When the question on the right of war and peace was agitating in the National Assembly, the people of England appeared to be much interested in the event, and highly to applaud the decision.—As a principle, it applies as much to one country as to another. William the Conqueror, *as a conqueror*, held this power of war and peace in himself, and his descendants have ever since claimed it under him as a right.

Although Mr. Burke has asserted the right of the Parliament at the Revolution to bind and controul the nation and posterity for *ever*, he denies, at the same time, that the parliament or the nation had any right to alter what he calls the succession of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a sort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the case back to the *Norman Conquest*; and by thus running a line of suc-

cession springing from William the Conqueror to the present day, he makes it necessary to enquire who and what William the Conqueror was, and where he came from; and into the origin, history, and nature of what are called prerogatives. Every thing must have had a beginning, and the fog of time and antiquity should be penetrated to discover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy, for it is to this origin that his argument goes. It also unfortunately happens, in running this line of succession, that another line parallel thereto, presents itself, which is, that if the succession runs in the line of the conquest, the nation runs in the line of being conquered, and it ought to rescue itself from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be said, that though the power of declaring war descends in the heritage of the conquest, it is held in check by the right of the parliament to withhold the supplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right, and it often happens that they do as much mischief one way as good the other: and such is the case here; for if the one rashly declares war as a matter of right, and the other peremptorily withholds the supplies as a matter of right, the remedy becomes as bad or worse than the disease. The one forces the nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands: But the more probable issue is, that the contrast will end in a collusion between the parties, and be made a screen to both.

On this question of war, three things are to be considered. First, the right of declaring it: Secondly,

the expence of supporting it :—Thirdly, the mode of conducting it after it is declared.—The French constitution places the *right* where the *expence* must fall, and this union can be only in the nation. The mode of conducting it after it is declared, it consigns to the executive department. Were this the case in all countries, we should hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to consider other parts of the French constitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote which I had from Dr. Franklin.—

While the Doctor resided in France as minister from America during the war, he had numerous proposals made to him by projectors of every country and of every kind, who wished to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America; and among the rest, there was one who offered himself to be King. He introduced his proposal to the Doctor by letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—stating, first, that as the Americans had dismissed or sent away * their King, that they would want another.—Secondly, that himself was a Norman.—Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the Dukes of Normandy, and of a more honourable descent, his line having never been bastardized. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England, of Kings coming out of Normandy: and on these grounds he rested his offer, *enjoining* that the Doctor would forward it to America. But as the Doctor did not do this, nor yet send

him an answer, the projector wrote a second letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only, with great dignity proposed, that if his offer was not accepted, that an acknowledgment of about £.30,000 might be made to him for his generosity!—Now, as all arguments respecting succession must necessarily connect that succession with some beginning, Mr. Burke's arguments on this subject go to shew, that there is no English origin of kings, and that they are descendants of the Norman line in right of the Conquest. It may, therefore, be of service to his doctrine to make this story known, and to inform him, that in the case of that natural extinction to which all mortality is subject, that kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reasonable terms than William the Conqueror; and consequently that the good people of England, at the Revolution of 1688, might have done much better, had such a generous Norman as *this* known *their* wants, and they had known *his*. The chivalry character which Mr. Burke so much admires, is certainly much easier to make a bargain with than a hard-dealing Dutchman.—But to return to the matters of the constitution—

The French constitution says, *There shall be no titles*: and of consequence, all that class of equivocal generation, which in some countries is called "*aristocracy*," and in others "*nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into MAN.

Titles are but nick-names, and every nick-name is a title. The

* The word he used was *renvoyé*, dismissed or sent away.

thing is perfectly harmless in itself, but it marks a sort of foppery in the human character which degrades it. It renders man into the diminutive of man in things which are great, and the counterfeit of woman in things which are little. It talks about its fine *blue ribbon*, like a girl, and shews its new *garter* like a child. A certain writer of some antiquity, says, "When I was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

It is, properly, from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles have fallen. It has outgrown the baby-cloaths of *Count* and *Duke*, and breeched itself in manhood. France has not levelled; it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf, to set up the man. The punyism of a senseless word like *Duke*, or *Count*, or *Earl*, has ceased to please. Even those who possessed them have disowned the gibberish, and, as they outgrew the rickets, have despised the rattle. The genuine mind of man, thirsting for its native home, society, contemns the gewgaws that separate him from it. Titles are like circles drawn by the magician's wand to contract the sphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the bastille of a word, and surveys at a distance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles should fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they should be kept up any where? What are they? What is their worth, and "what is their amount?" When we think or speak of a *Judge* or a *General*, we associate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one, and bravery in the other: but when we use a word merely as a *title*, no ideas

associate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not such an animal as a *Duke* or a *Count*; neither can we connect any certain idea to the words. Whether they mean strength or weakness, wisdom or folly, a child or a man, or the rider or the horse, is all equivocal. What respect then can be paid to that which describes nothing, and which means nothing?—Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, satyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical non-descript.

But this is not all.—If a whole country is disposed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them anything, or nothing, or worse than nothing. There is no occasion to take titles away, for they take themselves away when society concurs to ridicule them. This species of imaginary consequence has visibly declined in every part of Europe, and it hastens to its exit as the world of reason continues to rise. There was a time when the lowest class of what are called nobility was more thought of than the highest is now, and when a man in armour riding throughout Christendom in quest of adventures was more stared at than a modern Duke. The world has seen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its fate.—The patriots of France have discovered in good time that rank and dignity in society must take a new ground. The old one has fallen through.—It must now take the substantial ground of character, instead of the chimerical ground of titles; and they have brought the

titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt offering to reason.

If no mischief had annexed itself to the folly of titles they would not have been worth a serious and formal destruction, such as the National Assembly have decreed them: and this makes it necessary to enquire further into the nature and character of aristocracy.

That, then, which is called aristocracy in some countries, and nobility in others, arose out of the governments founded upon conquest. It was originally a military order for the purpose of supporting military government, (for such were all governments founded in conquest); and to keep up a succession of this order for the purpose for which it was established, all the younger branches of those families were disinherited, and the law of *primogeniture* set up.

The nature and character of aristocracy shews itself to us in this law. It is a law against every law of nature, and Nature herself calls for its destruction. Establish family justice, and aristocracy falls. By the aristocratical law of *primogeniture* in a family of six children, five are exposed. Aristocracy has never but *one* child. The rest are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural repast.

As every thing which is out of nature in man, affects; more or less, the interest of society, so does this. All the children which the aristocracy disowns (which are all except the eldest) are, in general, cast like orphans on a parish, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. — Unnecessary offices and places in governments and courts are created at the expence of the public, to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can a father or mother contemplate their younger offspring. By nature they are children, and by marriage they are heirs; but by aristocracy they are bastards and orphans. They are the flesh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To restore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to society—and to exterminate the monster Aristocracy, root and branch—the French constitution has destroyed the law of *PRIMOGENITURESHIP*. Here then lies the monster; and Mr. Burke, if he pleases, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have considered aristocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to consider it in another. But whether we view it before or behind, or side-ways, or any way else, domestically or publicly, it is still a monster.

In France, aristocracy had one feature less in its countenance than what it has in some other countries. It did not compose a body of hereditary legislators. It was not “*a corporation of aristocracy*,” for such I have heard M. de la Fayette describe an English House of Peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French constitution has resolved against having such an House in France.

Because in the first place, as is already mentioned, aristocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injustice.

Secondly, Because there is an unnatural unfitness in an aristocracy to be legislators for a nation. Their ideas of *distributive justice* are corrupted at the very source. They begin life by trampling on all their younger brothers and sisters, and re-

lations of every kind, and are taught and educated so to do. With what ideas of justice or honour can that man enter an house of legislation, who absorbs in his own person the inheritance of a whole family of children, or doles out to them some pitiful portion with the insolence of a gift?

Thirdly, Because the idea of hereditary legislators is as inconsistent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as absurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureat.

Fourthly, Because a body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody, ought not to be trusted by any body.

Fifthly, Because it is continuing the uncivilized principle of governments founded in conquest, and the base idea of man having property in man, and governing him by personal right.

Sixthly, Because aristocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human species—By the universal oeconomy of nature it is known, and by the instance of the Jews it is proved, that the human species has a tendency to degenerate, in any small number of persons, when separated from the general stock of society, and intermarrying constantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the opposite of what is noble in man. Mr. Burke talks of nobility; let him shew what it is. The greatest characters the world have known, have rose on the democratic floor. Aristocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial NOBLE shrinks into a dwarf

before the NOBLE of Nature; and in the few instances (for there are some in all countries) in whom nature, as by a miracle, has survived in aristocracy, THOSE MEN DESPISE IT. —But it is time to proceed to a new subject.

The French constitution has reformed the condition of the clergy. It has raised the income of the lower and middle classes, and taken from the higher. None are now less than twelve hundred livres (fifty pounds sterling) nor any higher than about two or three thousand pounds. What will Mr. Burke place against this? Hear what he says.

He says, “that the people of England can see, without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke; they can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of £. 10,000 a year; and cannot see why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl or that squire.” And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the first part, whether the archbishop precedes the duke, or the duke the bishop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, somewhat like *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, or *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*; you may put which you please first: and as I confess that I do not understand the merits of this case, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with respect to the latter, I have something to say.—Mr. Burke has not put the case right.—The comparison is out of order by being put between the bishop and the earl or the squire. It ought to be put between the bishop and the curate,

and then it will stand thus:—*The people of England can see, without pain or grudging, a bishop of Durham or of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a year, or less.*—No, Sir, they certainly do not see those things without great pain or grudging. It is a case that applies itself to every man's sense of justice, and is one among many that calls aloud for a constitution.

In France, the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the Dissenter's bill was before the English parliament: but the generality of the French clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew, that whatever the pretence might be, it was themselves who were one of the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between those of ten thousand pounds a year and the parish priest. They, therefore, joined their case to those of every other oppressed class of men, and by this union obtained redress.

The French constitution has abolished tythes, that source of perpetual discontent between the tythe-holder and the parishioner. When land is held on tythe, it is in the condition of an estate held between two parties; the one receiving one-tenth, and the other nine-tenths of the produce; and, consequently, on principles of equity, if the estate can be improved, and made to produce by that improvement double or treble what it did before, or in any other ratio, the expence of such im-

provement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to share the produce. But this is not the case in tythes; the farmer bears the whole expence, and the tythe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means gets the value of two-tenths instead of one. This is another case that calls for a constitution.

The French constitution hath abolished or renounced *Toleration*, and *Intoleration* also, and hath established UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

Toleration is not the *opposite* of Intoleration, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding Liberty of Conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the pope, armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the pope selling or granting indulgences. The former is church and state, and the latter is church and traffic.

But Toleration may be viewed in a much stronger light. Man worships not himself, but his Maker; and the liberty of conscience which he claims, is not for the service of himself, but of his God. In this case, therefore, we must necessarily have the associated idea of two beings: the *mortal* who renders the worship, and the IMMORTAL BEING who is worshipped. Toleration, therefore, places itself, not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man; between the being who worships, and the BEING who is worshipped; and by the same act of assumed authority by which

it tolerates man to pay his worship, it presumptuously sets itself up to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a Bill brought into any parliament, entitled, "AN ACT to tolerate or grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worship of a Jew or a Turk," or "prohibit the Almighty from receiving it," all men would startle, and call it blasphemy. There would be an uproar. The presumption of toleration in religious matters would then present itself unmasked: but the presumption is not the less because the name of "Man" only appears to those laws, for the associated idea of the *worshipper* and the *worshipped* cannot be separated—Who then, art thou, vain dust and ashes! by whatever name thou art called, whether a King, a Bishop, a Church or a State, a Parliament, or any thing else, that obtrudest thine insignificance between the soul of man and its Maker? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believest, it is a proof that thou believest not as he believest, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With respect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is wrong; but if they are to judge of each other's religion there is no such thing as a religion that is right; and therefore all the world are right, or all the world are wrong. But with respect to religion itself, without regard to names, and as directing itself from the universal family of mankind to the Divine object of all adoration, *it is man bring-*

ing to his Maker the fruits of his heart; and though those fruits may differ from each other like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A Bishop of Durham, or a Bishop of Winchester, or the Archbishop who heads the Dukes, will not refuse a tythe sheaf of wheat, because it is not a cock of hay; nor a cock of hay, because it is not a sheaf of wheat; nor a pig, because it is neither one nor the other: but these same persons, under the figure of an established church, will not permit their Maker to receive the varied tythes of man's devotions.

One of the continual choruses of Mr. Burke's book is, "Church and State;" he does not mean some one particular church, or some one particular state, but any church and state; and he uses the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the state in every country, and he censures the National Assembly for not having done this in France.—Let us bestow a few thoughts on this subject.

All religions are in their nature mild and benign, and united with principles of morality. They could not have made profelytes at first, by professing any thing that was vicious, cruel, persecuting, or immoral. Like every thing else, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by persuasion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they lose their native mildness, and become morose and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connection which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the church with the state, a sort of mule animal, capa-

ble only of destroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called *The Church established by Law*. It is a stranger, even from its birth, to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and destroys.

The inquisition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally professed, but from this mule-animal, engendered between the church and the state. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the same heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this strange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancour and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Dissenters to America. Persecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the strongly-marked feature of all law religions, or religions established by law. Take away the law-establishment, and every religion re-assumes its original benignity. In America a Catholic Priest is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbour; an Episcopalian Minister

is of the same description: and this proceeds, independent of the men, from there being no law-establishment in America.

If also we view this matter in a temporal sense, we shall see the ill effects it has had on the prosperity of nations. The union of church and state has impoverished Spain. The revoking the edict of Nantz drove the silk manufacture from that country into England; and church and state are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let then Mr. Burke continue to preach his anti-political doctrine of Church and State. It will do some good. The National Assembly will not follow his advice, but will benefit by his folly. It was by observing the ill effects of it in England that America has been warned against it; and it is by experiencing them in France that the National Assembly have abolished it, and, like America, has established **UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE, AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP** *.

* When in any country we see extraordinary circumstances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has a talent for observation and investigation, to inquire into the causes. The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, are the most principal manufactures in England. From whence did this arise? A little observation will explain the case. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants of those places, are not of what is called in England *the church established by law*; and they, or their fathers, (for it is within but a few years), withdrew from the persecution of the chartered towns, where Test-laws more particularly operate, and established a sort of asylum for themselves in those places. It was the only asylum that then offered, for the rest of Europe was worse.—But the case is now changing. France and America bid all comers welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenship. Policy and interest, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reason and justice could not. Those manufactures are withdrawing, and are arising in other places. There is now erecting at Passy, three miles from Paris, a large cotton mill, and several are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the Bill for repealing the Test law, one of the richest manufacturers in England said in my hearing; “England, Sir, is not a country for a Dissenter to live in—we must go to France.” These are truths, and it is doing justice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the Dissenters that have carried English manufactures to the height they are

I will here cease the comparison with respect to the principles of the French Constitution, and conclude this part of the subject with a few observations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and English governments.

The executive power in each country is in the hands of a person stiled the King; but the French constitution distinguishes between the King and the Sovereign: It considers the station of King as official, and places Sovereignty in the nation.

The representatives of the nation, which compose the National Assembly, and who are the legislative power, originate in and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the people.—In England it is otherwise, and this arises from the original establishment of what is called its monarchy; for, as by the conquest all the rights of the people or the nation were absorbed into the hands of the Conqueror, and who added the title of King to that of Conqueror, those same matters which in France are now held as rights in the people, or in the nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the Crown. The parliament in England, in both its branches, were erected by patents from the descendants of the Conqueror. The House of Commons did not originate as a matter of right

in the people to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French constitution, the Nation is always named before the King. The third article of the Declaration of rights says, “*The nation is essentially the source (or fountain) of all sovereignty.*” Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a King is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honour. But as this idea is evidently descended from the conquest, I shall make no other remark upon it than that it is the nature of the conquest to turn every thing upside down; and as Mr. Burke will not be refused the privilege of speaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *spout*, he will be right the second time.

The French constitution puts the legislative before the executive; the Law before the King; *La Loi, Le Roi*. This also is in the natural order of things; because laws must have existence, before they can have execution.

A King in France does not, in addressing himself to the National Assembly, say, “My assembly,” similar to the phrase used in England of “*my Parliament*,” neither can he use it consistent with the constitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the use of it in Eng-

are now at, and the same men have it in their power to carry them away; and though those manufactures will afterwards continue to be made in those places, the Foreign market will be lost. There are frequently appearing in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines, and as far as it can extend to persons, from going out of the country. It appears from these, that the ill effects of the test-laws and church-establishment begin to be much suspected; but the remedy of force can never supply the remedy of reason. In the progress of less than a century all the unrepresented part of England, of all denominations, which is at least a hundred times the most numerous, may begin to feel the necessity of a constitution, and then all those matters will come regularly before them.

land, because, as is before-mentioned, both Houses of Parliament originated out of what is called the Crown, by patent or boon—and not out of the inherent rights of the people, as the National Assembly does in France, and whose name designates its origin.

The President of the National Assembly does not ask the King *to grant* the Assembly liberty of speech, as is the case with the English House of Commons. The constitutional dignity of the National Assembly cannot debase itself. Speech is, in the first place, one of the natural rights of man always retained; and with respect to the National Assembly, the use of it is their *duty*, and the nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greatest body of men exercising the right of election the European world ever saw. They sprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they the vassal representatives of aristocratical ones. Feeling the proper dignity of their characters, they support it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or against a question, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumstances of the case. If any matter or subject respecting the executive department, or the person who presides in it, (the King), comes before them it is debated on with the spirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their answer, or their address, is returned in the same style. They stand not aloof with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of sycophantic insignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preserves, in every latitude of life, the right angled character of man.

Let us now look to the other side of the question.—In the addresses of the English Parliaments to their Kings, we see neither the intrepid spirit of the old Parliaments of France, nor the serene dignity of the present National Assembly; neither do we see in them any thing of the style of English manners, which borders somewhat on bluntness. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of English production, their origin must be sought for elsewhere, and that origin is the Norman Conquest. They are evidently of the vassalage class of manners, and emphatically mark the prostrate distance that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered. That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of even at the Revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of Parliament to William and Mary, in these words: “We do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs and posterities, for ever.” Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of Freedom, and an echo of the language used at the Conquest.

As the estimation of all things is by comparison, the Revolution of 1688, however from circumstances it may have been exalted beyond its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous revolutions of America and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labours, “to the family vault of all the Capulets.” Mankind will then scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for

a man, and clothe him with power on purpose to put themselves in fear of him, and give him almost a million sterling a-year for leave to *submit* themselves and their posterity, like bond-men and bond-women, for ever.

But there is a truth that ought to be made known: I have had the opportunity of seeing it: which is, *that, notwithstanding the appearances, there is not any description of men that despise monarchy so much as courtiers.* But they well know, if it were seen by others, as it is seen by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living by a show, and to whom the folly of that show is so familiar that they ridicule it; but were the audience to be made as wise, in this respect, as themselves, there would be an end to the show and the profits with it. The difference between a republican and a courtier with respect to monarchy is, that the one opposes monarchy, believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it, knowing it to be nothing.

As I used sometimes to correspond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of sounder principles than his book shews him to be, I wrote to him last winter from Paris, and gave him an account how prosperously matters were going on. Among other subjects in that letter, I referred to the happy situation the National Assembly were placed in: that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political interest were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not believe, for the fraudulent purpose of making others believe it. Their station requires no artifice to support it, and can only be

maintained by enlightening mankind. It is not their interest to cherish ignorance, but to dispel it. They are not in the case of a ministerial or an opposition party in England, who, though they are opposed, are still united to keep up the common mystery. The National Assembly must throw open a magazine of light. It must shew man the proper character of man; and the nearer it can bring him to that standard, the stronger the National Assembly becomes.

In contemplating the French constitution, we see in it a rational order of things. The principles harmonise with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be said, as an excuse for bad forms, that they are nothing more than forms; but this is a mistake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impossible to practise a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on a good one: and wherever the forms in any government are bad, it is a certain indication that the principles are bad also.

I will here finally close this subject. I began it by remarking that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into a comparison of the English and French constitutions. He apologises (in page 241) for not doing it, by saying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and is extended to a volume of three hundred and fifty-six pages. As his omission does injury to his cause, his apology makes it worse; and men on the English side of the water will begin to consider, whether there is not some radical defect in what is called the

English constitution, that made it necessary in Mr. Burke to suppress the comparison, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on constitutions, so neither has he written on the French revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or its progress. He only expresses his wonder. "It looks," says he, "to me, as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world."

As wise men are astonished at foolish things, and other people at wise ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's astonishment; but certain it is, that he does not understand the French revolution. It has apparently burst forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the consequence of a mental revolution priorly existing in France. The mind of the nation had changed before hand, and the new order of things has naturally followed the new order of thoughts.—I will here, as concisely as I can, trace out the growth of the French revolution, and mark the circumstances that have contributed to produce it.

The despotism of Louis XIV. united with the gaiety of his Court, and the gaudy ostentation of his character, had so humbled, and at the same time so fascinated the mind of France, that the people appear to have lost all sense of their own dignity in contemplating that of their grand Monarch:—and the whole reign of Louis

XV. remarkable only for weakness and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of spreading a sort of lethargy over the nation, from which it shewed no disposition to rise.

The only signs which appeared of the spirit of liberty during these periods, are to be found in the writings of French philosophers.—Montesquieu, president of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a despotic government could well proceed; and being obliged to divide himself between principle and prudence, his mind often appears under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expressed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and the satyrist of despotism, took another line. His fort lay in exposing and ridiculing the superstitions which priest-craft united with state-craft had interwoven with government. It was not from the purity of his principles, or his love of mankind, (for satire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant), but from his strong capacity of seeing folly in its true shape, and his irresistible propensity to expose it, that he made those attacks. They were however as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous; and he merits the thanks rather than the esteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rousseau and the Abbé Raynal a loveliness of sentiment in favour of Liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties; but having raised this animation, they do not direct its operations, and leave the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it.

The writings of Quisne, Turgot, and the friends of those authors, are of the serious kind; but they laboured under the same disadvantage with Montesquieu: their writings abound with moral maxims of government, but are rather directed to œconomise and reform the administration of the government, than the government itself.

But all those writings and many others had their weight; and by the different manner in which they treated the subject of government, Montesquieu by his judgment and knowledge of laws, Voltaire by his wit, Rousseau and Raynal by their animation, and Quisne and Turgot by their moral maxims and systems of œconomy, readers of every class met with something to their taste, and a spirit of political enquiry began to diffuse itself through the nation at the time the dispute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the nation appeared to be before-hand with the French ministry. Each of them had its views: but those views were directed to different objects, the one sought liberty, and the other retaliation on England. The French officers and soldiers who after this went to America, were eventually placed in the school of Freedom, and learned the practice as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it was impossible to separate the military events which took place in America from the principles of the American revolution, the publication of those events in France, necessarily connected themselves with the

principles that produced them. Many of the facts were in themselves principles; such as the declaration of American independence, and the treaty of Alliance between France and America, which recognised the natural right of man, and justified resistance to oppression.

The then Minister of France, Count Vergennes, was not the friend of America; and it is both justice and gratitude to say, that it was the Queen of France, who gave the cause of America a fashion at the French Court. Count Vergennes was the personal and social friend of Dr. Franklin; and the Doctor had obtained, by his sensible gracefulness, a sort of influence over him; but with respect to principles, Count Vergennes was a despot.

The situation of Dr. Franklin as Minister from America to France, should be taken into the chain of circumstances. The diplomatic character is of itself the narrowest sphere of society that man can act in. It forbids intercourse by a reciprocity of suspicion; and a Diplomatic is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the case with Dr. Franklin. He was not the diplomatic of a Court, but of MAN. His character as a philosopher had been long established, and his circle of society in France was universal.

Count Vergennes resisted for a considerable time the publication of the American constitutions in France, translated into the French language; but even in this he was obliged to give way the public opinion, and a sort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American constituti-

ens were to liberty what a grammar is to language: they define its parts of speech, and practically construct them into syntax.

The peculiar situation of the then Marquis de la Fayette, is another link in the great chain. He served in America as an American officer under a commission of Congress, and by the universality of his acquaintance, was in close friendship with the civil government of America, as well as with the military line. He spoke the language of the country, entered into the discussions on the principles of government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war closed, a vast reinforcement to the cause of Liberty spread itself over France, by the return of the French officers and soldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it real existence, was opportunity. — Man cannot, properly speaking, make circumstances for his purpose, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur; and this was the case in France.

M. Neckar was displaced in May 1781; and by the ill management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant administration of M. Calonne, the revenue of France, which was nearly twenty four millions sterling *per* year, was become unequal to the expenditures, not because the revenue had decreased, but because the expenses had increased; and this was the circumstance which the nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The English Minister, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the state of the French finances in his

budgets, without understanding the subject—Had the French Parliaments been as ready to register edicts for new taxes, as an English Parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any revolution; but this will better explain itself as I proceed.

It will be necessary here to shew how taxes were formerly raised in France. The King or rather the Court or Ministry acting under the use of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own discretion, and sent them to the Parliaments to be registered; for until they were registered by the Parliaments, they were not operative. Disputes had existed between the Court and the Parliament with respect to the extent of the Parliament's authority on this head. The Court insisted that the authority of Parliament went no further than to remonstrate or shew reasons against the tax, reserving to itself the right of determining whether the reasons were well or ill-founded; and in consequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to *order* it to be enregistered as a matter of authority. The Parliaments on their part insisted, that they had not only a right to remonstrate, but to reject; and on this ground they were always supported by the nation.

But, to return to the order of my narrative—M. Calonne wanted money; and as he knew the sturdy disposition of the Parliaments with respect to new taxes, he ingeniously sought either to approach them by a more gentle means than that of direct authority, or to get over their heads by a manœuvre: and for this purpose, he revived the project of

assembling a body of men from the several provinces, under the stile of an "Assembly of the Notables," or Men of Note, who met in 1787, and who were either to recommend taxes to the Parliament, or to act as a Parliament themselves. An Assembly under this name had been called in 1687.

As we are to view this as the first practical step towards the revolution, it will be proper to enter into some particulars respecting it. The Assembly of the Notables has in some places been mistaken for the States-General, but was wholly a different body; the States General being always by election. The persons who composed the Assembly of the Notables were all nominated by the King, and consisted of one hundred and forty members. But as M. Calonne could not depend upon a majority of this Assembly in his favour, he very ingeniously arranged them in such a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty: to effect this he disposed of them into seven separate committees, of twenty members each. Every general question was to be decided, not by a majority of persons, but by a majority of committees; and as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of seven, M. Calonne had good reason to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general question, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then Marquis de la Fayette was placed in the second Committee, of which Count D'Artois was president: and as money-matters was

the object, it naturally brought into view every circumstance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge against Calonne, for selling crown lands to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the King. The Count D'Artois (as if to intimidate, for the Bastile was then in being) asked the Marquis, if he would render the charge in writing?—He replied, that he would.—The Count D'Artois did not demand it, but brought a message from the King to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the King, undertaking to support it. No farther proceedings were had upon this affair; but M. Calonne was soon after dismissed by the King, and set off to England.

As M. de la Fayette, from the experience he had seen in America, was better acquainted with the science of civil government than the generality of the members who composed the Assembly of the Notables could then be, the brunt of the business fell considerably to his share. The plan of those who had a constitution in view, was to contend with the Court on the ground of taxes, and some of them openly professed their object. Disputes frequently arose between Count D'Artois and M. de la Fayette, upon various subjects. With respect to the arrears already incurred, the latter proposed to remedy them, by accommodating the expences to the revenue, instead of the revenue to the expences; and as objects of reform, he proposed to abolish the Bastile, and all the State-prisons throughout the nation, (the keeping of which

was attended with great expence), and to suppress *Lettres de Cachet*: But those matters were not then much attended to; and with respect to *Lettres de Cachet*, a majority of the Nobles appeared to be in favour of them.

On the subject of supplying the Treasury by new taxes, the Assembly declined taking the matter on themselves, concurring in the opinion that they had not authority. In a debate on this subject, M. de la Fayette said, that raising money by taxes could only be done by a National Assembly freely elected by the people, and acting as their representatives. Do you mean, said the Count D'Artois, the *States General*? M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, said the Count D'Artois, sign what you say, to be given to the King? The other replied that he not only would do this, but that he would go farther, and say, that the effectual mode would be, for the King to agree to the establishment of a constitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the Assembly to act as a Parliament, the other came into view, that of recommending. On this subject the Assembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregistered by the Parliament: the one a stamp tax, and the other a territorial tax, or sort of land tax. The two have been estimated at above five millions Sterl. *per ann.* We have now to turn our attention to the Parliament, on whom the business was again devolving.

The Archbishop of Thoulouse (since Archbishop of Sens, and now a Cardinal) was appointed to the

administration of the finances, soon after the dismissal of Calonne. He was also made Prime Minister, an office that did not always exist in France. When this office did not exist, the Chief of each of the principal departments transacted business immediately with the King; but when a Prime Minister was appointed, they did business only with him. The Archbishop arrived to more State-authority than any Minister since the Duke de Choiseuil, and the Nation was strongly disposed in his favour; but by a line of conduct scarcely to be accounted for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a despot, and sunk into disgrace, and a Cardinal.

The Assembly of the Notables having broke up, the new Minister sent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the Assembly to the Parliaments, to be enregistered. They of course returned for answer, *That with such a revenue as the Nation then supported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpose of reducing them:* and threw both the edicts out*.

On this refusal, the Parliament was ordered to Versailles, where, in the usual form, the King held, what under the old government was called, a Bed of Justice; and the two edicts were enregistered in presence of the Parliament, by an order of the States, in the manner mentioned in page 140. On this the Parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their session in form, and ordered the enregistering to be struck out, declaring that every thing done at Versailles was illegal. All the members of the Par-

* When the English Minister, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the English Parliament, it would be well that he noticed this as an example.

liament were then served with Lettres de Cachet, and exiled to Troyes; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not supply the place of taxes, they were after a short time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the Count d'Artois undertook to act as representative for the King. For this purpose he came from Versailles to Paris, in a train of procession; and the Parliament were assembled to receive him. But show and parade had lost their influence in France; and whatever ideas of importance he might set off with, he had to return with those of mortification and disappointment. On alighting from his carriage to ascend the steps of the Parliament House, the crowd (which was numerously collected) threw out trite expressions, saying, "This is Monsieur D'Artois, who wants more of our money to spend." The marked disapprobation which he saw, impressed him with apprehensions; and the word *Aux armes* (*To arms*) was given out by the officer of the guard who attended him. It was so loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the House, and produced a temporary confusion: I was then standing in one of the apartments through which he had to pass, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched was the condition of a disrespected man.

He endeavoured to impress the Parliament by great words, and opened his authority by saying, "The King our Lord and Master." The parliament received him very coolly, and with their usual determination not to register the taxes, and in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new subject took place. In the various debates and contests that arose between the Court and the Parliaments on the subject of taxes, the Parliament of Paris at last declared, that although it had been customary for Parliaments to enregister edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonged only to the *States-General*; and that, therefore, the Parliament could no longer with propriety continue to debate on what it had not authority to act. The King after this came to Paris, and held a meeting with the Parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about six in the evening; and, in a manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconsulted upon with the cabinet or the ministry, gave his word to the Parliament, that the *States-General* should be convened.

But after this another scene arose, on a ground different from all the former. The minister and the cabinet were averse to calling the *States-General*: They well knew, that if the *States-General* were assembled, that themselves must fall; and as the King had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppose.

For this purpose, the Court set about making a sort of Constitution itself: It was principally the work of M. Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, who afterwards shot himself. This new arrangement consisted in establishing a body under the name of a *Cour Plénier*, or full Court, in which were invested all the powers that the government might have occasion to make use of. The persons composing this Court were to be nominated by the King; the contended right of

taxation was given up on the part of the King, and a new criminal code of laws, and law proceedings, was substituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than those upon which the government had hitherto been administered: but with respect to the *Cour Plénier*e, it was no other than a medium through which despotism was to pass, without appearing to act directly from itself.

The Cabinet had high expectations from their new contrivance. The persons who were to compose the *Cour Plénier*e were already nominated; and at it was necessary to carry a fair appearance, many of the best characters in the nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 3th of May, 1788: But an opposition arose to it on two grounds—the one as to Principle, the other as to Form.

On the ground of Principle it was contended, That government had not a right to alter itself; and that if the practice was once admitted, it would grow into a principle, and be made a precedent for any future alterations the government might wish to establish: That the right of altering the government was a national right, and not a right of government.—And on the ground of Form it was contended, That the *Cour Plénier*e was nothing more than a larger Cabinet.

The then Duke de la Rochefoucault, Luxembourg, De Noailles, and many others, refused to accept the nomination, and strenuously opposed the whole plan. When the edict for establishing this new Court was sent to the Parliaments to be enregistered, and put into execution, they resisted also. The Parliament of Paris not

only refused, but denied the authority; and the contest renewed itself between the Parliament and the Cabinet more strongly than ever. While the Parliament were sitting in debate on this subject, the Ministry ordered a regiment of soldiers to surround the House, and form a blockade. The Members sent out for beds and provision, and lived as in a besieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the Parliament House and seize them, which he did, and some of the principal members were shut up in different prisons. About the same time a deputation of persons arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonstrate against the establishment of the *Cour Plénier*e: and those the Archbishop sent to the Bastile. But the spirit of the nation was not to be overcome: and it was so fully sensible of the strong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itself with keeping up a sort of quiet resistance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed against it.—The project of the *Cour Plénier*e was at last obliged to be given up, and the Prime Minister not long afterwards followed its fate; and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to establish the *Cour Plénier*e had an effect upon the Nation which itself did not perceive. It was a sort of new form of government, that insensibly served to put the old one out of sight, and to unhinge it from the superstitious authority of antiquity. It was government dethroning government: and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chasm.

The failure of this scheme renewed the subject of convening the States-General; and this gave rise to a new series of politics. There was no settled form for convening the States-General: all that it positively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the Clergy, the Noblesse, and the Commons; but their numbers, or their proportions, had not been been always the same. They had been convened only on extraordinary occasions, the last of which was in 1614: their numbers were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It could not well escape the sagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would answer neither the purpose of the then government, nor of the nation. As matters were at that time circumstanced, it would have been too contentious to agree upon any thing. The debates would have been endless upon privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of the government, nor the wishes of the nation for a constitution, would have been attended to. But as he did not chuse to take the decision upon

himself, he summoned again the *Assembly of the Notables*, and referred it to them. This body was in general interested in the decision, being chiefly of the aristocracy and the high-paid clergy; and they decided in favour of the mode of 1614. This decision was against the sense of the Nation, and also against the wishes of the Court; for the aristocracy opposed itself to both, and contended for privileges independent of either. The subject was then taken up by the Parliament, who recommended that the number of the Commons should be equal to the other two; and that they should all sit in one house, and vote in one body. The number finally determined on was twelve hundred; six hundred to be chosen by the Commons, and this was less than their proportion ought to have been when their worth and consequence is considered on a national scale); three hundred by the clergy, and three hundred by the aristocracy; but with respect to the mode of assembling themselves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they should vote, those matters were referred*.

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* Mr. Burke (and I must take the liberty of telling him he is very unacquainted with the French affairs), speaking upon this subject, says, "The first thing that struck me in the calling the States-General, was a great departure from the ancient course;"—and he soon after says, "From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow."—Mr. Burke certainly did not see all that was to follow. I have endeavoured to impress him, as well before as after the States-General met, that there would be a *revolution*; but was not able to make him see it, neither would he believe it. How then he could distinctly see all the parts, when the whole was out of sight, is beyond my comprehension. And with respect to the "departure from the ancient course," besides the natural weakness of the remark, it shews that he is unacquainted with circumstances. The departure was necessary, from the experience had upon it, that the ancient course was a bad one. The States-General of 1614 were called at the commencement of the civil war in the minority of Louis XIII.; but by the clash of arranging them by orders, they increased the confusion they were called to compose. The author of *L'Intrigue du Cabinet* (Intrigue of the Cabinet), who wrote before any revolution was thought of in France, speaking of the States-General of 1614, says, "They held the public in suspense five months; and by the questions agitated therein, and the heat with
" which

The election that followed, was not a contested election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men, but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correspondence and communication established throughout the nation, for the purpose of enlightening the people, and explaining to them the principles of civil government; and so orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give rise even to the rumour of tumult.

The States-General were to meet at Versailles in April 1689, but did not assemble till May. They situated themselves in three separate chambers, or rather the clergy and the aristocracy withdrew each into a separate chamber. The majority of the aristocracy claimed what they called the privilege of voting as a separate body, and of giving their consent or their negative in that manner; and many of the bishops and the high-beneficed clergy claimed the same privilege on the part of their Order.

The *Tiers Etat* (as they were then called) disowned any knowledge of artificial Orders and artificial Privileges; and they were not only resolute on this point, but somewhat disdainful. They began to consider aristocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of the corruption of society, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it; and from the disposition the aristocracy had shewn by upholding *Lettres de Cachet*, and in sundry other instances, it was manifest that no constitution could be

formed by admitting men in any other character than as National Men.

After various altercations on this head, the *Tiers Etat* or commons (as they were then called) declared themselves (on a motion made for that purpose by the Abbe Syeyes) "THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION; and that the two Orders could be considered but as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberative voice but when they assembled in a national character with the national representatives."

This proceeding extinguished the stile of *Etats Generaux*, or States-General, and erected it into the stile it now bears, that of *L'Assemblée Nationale*, or National Assembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner: It was the result of cool deliberation, and concerted between the national representatives and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who saw into the folly, mischief, and injustice of artificial privileged distinctions. It was become evident, that no constitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be established on any thing less than a national ground. The aristocracy had hitherto opposed the despotism of the Court, and affected the language of patriotism; but it opposed it as its rival, (as the English barons opposed King John); and it now opposed the nation from the same motives.

On carrying this motion, the national representatives, as had been

"which they were put, it appears that the Great (*les grandes*) thought more to satisfy their particular passions, than to procure the good of the nation; and the whole time passed away in altercations, ceremonies and parade." *L'Intrigue du Cabinet*, vol. 1. p. 1. 329.

concerted, sent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite them in a national character, and proceed to business. A majority of the clergy, chiefly of the parish priests, withdrew from the clerical chamber and joined the nation; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner. There is a sort of secret history belonging to this last circumstance, which is necessary to its explanation: It was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chamber, styling itself the Nobles, should quit it at once; and in consequence of this arrangement they drew off by degrees, always leaving some, as well to reason the case, as to watch the suspected. In a little time, the numbers increased from forty-five to eighty, and soon after to a greater number; with which a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the national representatives, put the mal-contents in a very diminutive condition.

The King, who, very different to the general class called by that name, is a man of a good heart, shewed himself disposed to recommend a union of the three chambers, on the ground the National Assembly had taken; but the mal-contents exerted themselves to prevent it, and began now to have another project in view. Their numbers consisted of a majority of the aristocratical chamber, and a minority of the clerical chamber, chiefly of bishops and high-beneficed clergy; and these men were determined to put every thing to issue, as well by strength as by stratagem. They had no objection to a constitution; but it must be such an one as themselves should dictate, and suited to their own views and particular situations. On the other hand, the Nation disowned knowing any thing

of them but as citizens, and was determined to shut out all such up-start pretensions. The more aristocracy appeared, the more it was despised; there was a visible imbecility and want of intellects in the majority, a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, that while it affected to be more than citizen, was less than man. It lost ground from contempt more than from hatred; and was rather jeered at as an ass, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of aristocracy, or what are called Nobles or Nobility in all countries.

The plan of the mal-contents consisted now of two things; either to deliberate and vote by chambers, (or orders), more especially on all questions respecting a constitution, (by which the aristocratical chamber would have had a negative on any article of the constitution); or, in case they could not accomplish this object, to overthrow the National Assembly entirely.

To effect one or other of these objects, they began now to cultivate a friendship with the despotism they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the Count D'Artois became their chief. The King, (who has since declared himself deceived into their measures) held, according to the old form, a *Bed of Justice*, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tête* (by head) upon several objects; but reserved the deliberation and vote upon all questions respecting a constitution to the three chambers separately. This declaration of the King was made against the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of fashion at Court, and that another minister was in contemplation.

As the form of sitting in separate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though essentially destroyed, the national representatives, immediately after this declaration of the King, resorted to their own chambers, to consult on a protest against it; and the minority of the chamber (calling itself the Nobles), who had joined the national cause, retired to a private house, to consult in like manner. The mal-contents had by this time concerted their measures with the Court, which Count D'Artois undertook to conduct; and as they saw, from the discontent which the declaration excited, and the opposition making against it, that they could not obtain a controul over the intended constitution by a separate vote, they prepared themselves for their final object—that of conspiring against the National Assembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the chamber of the National Assembly was shut against them, and guarded by troops; and the Members were refused admittance. On this, they withdrew to a tennis-ground in the neighbourhood of Versailles, as the most convenient place they could find, and, after renewing their session, took an oath never to separate from each other, under any circumstance whatever, death excepted, until they had established a constitution. As the experiment of shutting up the house had no other effect than that of producing a closer connection in the Members, it was opened again the next day, and the public business recommenced in the usual place.

We are now to have in view the forming of the new Ministry, which was to accomplish the overthrow of the National Assembly. But as force

would be necessary, orders were issued to assemble thirty thousand troops, the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new-intended Ministry, who was recalled from the country for this purpose. But as some management was necessary to keep this plan concealed till the moment it should be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by Count D'Artois must be attributed, and which is here proper to be introduced.

It could not but occur, that while the mal-contents continued to resort to their chambers separate from the National Assembly, that more jealousy would be excited than if they were mixed with it, and that the plot might be suspected. But as they had taken their ground, and now wanted a pretence for quitting it, it was necessary that one should be devised. This was effectually accomplished by a declaration made by Count D'Artois, "*That if they took not a part in the National Assembly, the life of the King would be endangered;*" on which they quitted their chambers, and mixed with the Assembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of absurdity in Count D'Artois, and calculated merely to relieve the outstanding Members of the two chambers from the diminutive situation they were put in; and if nothing more had followed, this conclusion would have been good. But as things best explain themselves by their events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations that were secretly going on; and the declaration accommodated itself to answer that purpose. In a little time the National Assembly found itself

surrounded by troops, and thousands daily arriving. On this a very strong declaration was made by the National Assembly to the King, remonstrating on the impropriety of the measure, and demanding the reason. The King, who was not in the secret of this business, as himself afterwards declared, gave substantially for answer, that he had no other object in view than to preserve the public tranquillity, which appeared to be much disturbed.

But in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itself. M. Neckar and the Ministry were displaced, and a new one formed, of the enemies of the Revolution; and Broglio, with between twenty-five and thirty thousand foreign troops, was arrived to support them. The mask was now thrown off, and matters were come to a crisis.—The event was, that in the space of three days, the new Ministry and their abettors found it prudent to fly the nation; the Bastile was taken, and Broglio and his foreign troops dispersed; as is already related in the former part of this work.

There are some curious circumstances in the history of this short-lived ministry, and this short-lived attempt at a counter-revolution. The palace of Versailles, where the Court was sitting, was not more than four hundred yards distant from the hall where the National Assembly was sitting. The two places were at this moment like the separate headquarters of two combatant armies; yet the Court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the National Assembly as if it had resided at an hundred miles distance. The then Marquis

de la Fayette, who (as has been already mentioned) was chosen to preside in the National Assembly on this particular occasion, named by order of the Assembly, three successive deputations to the King, on the day, and up to the evening on which the Bastile was taken, to inform and confer with him on the state of affairs: but the ministry, who knew not so much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were solacing themselves how dexterously they had succeeded; but in a few hours the accounts arrived so thick and fast, that they had to start from their desks and run. Some set off in one disguise, and some in another, and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news, lest they should be stopt, which though it flew fast, flew not so fast as themselves.

It is worth remarking, that the National Assembly neither pursued those fugitive conspirators, nor took any notice of them, nor sought to retaliate in any shape whatever. Occupied with establishing a constitution founded on the Rights of Man, and the Authority of the People, the only authority on which government has a right to exist in any country, the National Assembly felt none of those mean passions which mark the character of impertinent governments, founding themselves on their own authority, or on the absurdity of hereditary succession. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in unison with its object.

The conspiracy being thus dispersed, one of the first works of the National Assembly, instead of vindictive proclamations, as has been

the case with other governments, the new constitution was to be published a Declaration of the Rights of Man, as the basis on which built, and which is here subjoined.

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS.

By the National Assembly of France.

"The Representatives of the people of France formed into a National Assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes and corruptions of government, have resolved to set forth, in a solemn declaration, these natural, imprescriptible, and unalienable rights:—that this declaration being constantly present to the minds of the members of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties: that the acts of the legislative and executive powers of government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be more respected: and also, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the constitution, and the general happiness.

"For these reasons, the National Assembly doth recognize and declare, in the presence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his blessing and favour, the following sacred rights of men and of citizens:

"I. Men are born and always continue free, and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

"II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.

"III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty; nor can any INDIVIDUAL or ANY BODY OF MEN, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.

"IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exercise of the natural rights of every man, has no other limits than those which are necessary to secure to every other man the free exercise of the same rights; and these limits are determinable only by the law.

"V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to society.—What is not prohibited by the law, should not be hindered; nor should any one be compelled to that which the law does not require.

"VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.

"VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, execute, or cause to be exe-

‘ cuted, arbitrary orders, ought to be
‘ punished; and every citizen called
‘ upon or apprehended by virtue of the
‘ law, ought immediately to obey, and
‘ not render himself culpable by resist-
‘ ance.

‘ VIII. The law ought to impose no
‘ other penalties than such as are abso-
‘ lutely and evidently necessary: and no
‘ one ought to be punished, but in vir-
‘ tue of a law promulgated before the
‘ offence, and legally applied.

‘ IX. Every man being presumed
‘ innocent till he has been convicted,
‘ whenever his detention becomes in-
‘ dispensable, all rigour to him more
‘ than is necessary to secure his person,
‘ ought to be provided against by the
‘ law.

‘ X. No man ought to be molested
‘ on account of his opinions, not even
‘ on account of his religious opinions,
‘ provided his avowal of them does
‘ not disturb the public order established
‘ by the law.

‘ XI. The unrestrained communi-
‘ cation of thoughts and opinions being
‘ one of the most precious rights of
‘ man, every citizen may speak, write,
‘ and publish freely, provided he is re-
‘ sponsible for the abuse of this liberty
‘ in cases determined by the law.

‘ XII. A public force being necessary
‘ to give security to the rights of men
‘ and of citizens, that force is instituted
‘ for the benefit of the community, and
‘ not for the particular benefit of the
‘ persons with whom it is entrusted.

‘ XIII. A common contribution being
‘ necessary for the support of the public
‘ force, and for defraying the other
‘ expences of government, it ought to
‘ be divided equally among the mem-
‘ bers of the community, according to
‘ their abilities.

‘ XIV. Every citizen has a right,
‘ either by himself or his representative,
‘ to a free voice in determining the ne-
‘ cessity of public contributions, the ap-
‘ propriation of them, and their amount,
‘ mode of assessment, and duration.

‘ XV. Every community has a right
‘ to demand of all its agents an account
‘ of their conduct.

‘ XVI. Every community in which
‘ a separation of powers and a security
‘ of rights is not provided for, wants
‘ a constitution.

‘ XVII. The right to property being
‘ inviolable and sacred, no one ought
‘ to be deprived of it, except in
‘ cases of evident public necessity legally
‘ ascertained, and on condition of a
‘ previous just indemnity.’

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

The three first articles comprehend in general terms, the whole of a Declaration of Rights: all the succeeding articles either originate out of them, or follow as elucidations. The 4th, 5th, and 6th, define more particularly what is only generally expressed in the 1st, 2d, and 3d.

The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th articles, are declaratory of principles upon which laws shall be construed

conformable to rights already declared. But it is questioned by some very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the 10th article sufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with: besides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind to make it a subject of human laws. It then presents itself to Man like light

intercepted by a cloudy medium, in which the source of it is obscured from his sight, and he sees nothing to reverence in the dusky ray*.

The remaining articles, beginning with the twelfth, are substantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles, but, in the particular situation which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to set up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than what in another condition of things would be necessary.

While the Declaration of Rights was before the National Assembly, some of its members remarked, that if a Declaration of Rights was published, it should be accompanied by a Declaration of Duties. The observation discovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A Declaration of Rights is, by reciprocity, a Declaration of Duties also. Whatever is my right as a man, is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to possess.

The three first articles are the basis of Liberty, as well individual as national; nor can any country be called free, whose government does not take its beginning from the prin-

ciples they contain, and continue to preserve them pure; and the whole of the Declaration of Rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, we see the solemn and majestic spectacle of a Nation opening its commission, under the auspices of its Creator, to establish a Government; a scene so new, and so transcendantly unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a Revolution is diminutive of its character, and it rises into a Regeneration of man. What are the present Governments of Europe, but a scene of iniquity and oppression? What is that of England? Does not its own inhabitants say, it is a market where every man has his price, and where corruption is common traffic, at the expence of a deluded people? No wonder then, that the French Revolution is traduced.—Had it confined itself merely to the destruction of flagrant despotism, perhaps Mr. Burke and some others had been silent. Their cry now is, “It has gone too far:” that is, it has gone too far

* There is a single idea, which, if it strikes rightly upon the mind, either in a legal or a religious sense, will prevent any man, or any body of men, or any government, from going wrong on the subject of Religion; which is, that before any human institutions of government were known in the world there existed, if I may so express it, a compact between God and Man, from the beginning of time; and that as the relation and condition which man in his *individual person* stands in towards his Maker, cannot be changed, or any ways altered by any human laws or human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot so much as be made a subject of human laws; and that all laws must conform themselves to this prior existing compact, and not assume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, besides being human, are subsequent thereto. The first act of man, when he looked around and saw himself a creature which he did not make, and a world furnished for his reception, must have been devotion; and devotion must ever continue sacred to every individual man, *as it appears right to him*; and governments do mischief by interfering.

for them. It stares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear discovers itself in their outrage, and they are but publishing the groans of a wounded vice. But from such opposition, the French Revolution, instead of suffering, receives an homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit; and the fear is, it will not be struck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks:—Truth has given it an establishment; and Time will

record it with a name as lasting as his own.

Having now traced the progress of the French Revolution through most of its principal stages, from its commencement to the taking of the Bastille, and its establishment by the Declaration of Rights, I will close the subject with the energetic apostrophe of M. de la Fayette—*May this great monument raised to liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!**

MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

TO prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reserved some observations to be thrown together into a Miscellaneous Chapter; by which variety might not be censured for confusion. Mr. Burke's Book is *all* Miscellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French Revolution; but instead of proceeding with an orderly arrangement, he has stormed it with a Mob of ideas, tumbling over and destroying one another.

But this confusion and contradiction in Mr. Burke's Book, is easily accounted for.—When a man in a long cause attempts to steer his course by any thing else than some polar truth or principle, he is sure to be lost. It is beyond the compass of his capacity, to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one issue, by any other means than having this guide always in view.

Neither memory nor invention will supply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithstanding the nonsense, for it deserves no better name, that Mr. Burke has asserted about hereditary rights, and hereditary succession, and that a Nation has not a right to form a Government for itself; it happened to fall in his way to give some account of what government is.—“*Government*, says he, *is a contrivance of human wisdom.*”

Admitting that Government is a contrivance of human *wisdom*, it must necessarily follow, that hereditary succession, and hereditary rights (as they are called), can make no part of it, because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and on the other hand, *that* cannot be a wise contrivance, which in its operation may commit the government of a nation to the wisdom of an idiot. The ground which Mr. Burke now takes is fatal

* See page 100 of this work—N. B. Since the taking the Bastille, the occurrences have been published; but the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period; and some of them, as may easily be seen, can be but very little known.

to every part of his cause. The argument changes from hereditary rights to hereditary wisdom; and the question is, Who is the wisest man? He must now shew that every one in the line of hereditary succession was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a king. — What a stroke has Mr. Burke now made! — To use a sailor's phrase, he has *swabbed the deck*, and scarcely left a name legible in the list of kings, and he has mowed down and thinned the House of Peers, with a scythe as formidable as Death and Time.

But, Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort, and he has taken care to guard against it, by making government to be not only a *contrivance* of human wisdom, but a *monopoly* of wisdom. He puts the nation as fools on one side, and places his government of wisdom, all wise men of Gotham, on the other side; and he then proclaims, and says, that “ *Men have a RIGHT that their WANTS should be provided for by this wisdom.* ” — Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them, what their *wants* are, and also what their *rights* are. In this he has succeeded dexterously, for he makes their wants to be *want* of wisdom; but as this is but cold comfort, he then informs them, that they have a *right* (not to any of the wisdom) but to be governed by it: and in order to impress them with a solemn reverence for this monopoly government of wisdom, and its vast capacity for all purposes, possible or impossible, right or wrong, he proceeds with astrological mysterious importance, to tell them its powers, in these words — “ The Rights of men in government are

“ their advantages; and these are often
“ in balances between differences of
“ good; and in compromises sometimes
“ between *good* and *evil*, and some-
“ times between *evil* and *evil*. Poli-
“ tical reason is a *computing princi-
“ ple*: adding — subtracting — multi-
“ plying — and dividing, morally,
“ and not metaphysically, or mathe-
“ matically true moral demonstra-
“ tions.”

As the wondering audience whom Mr. Burke supposes himself talking to, may not understand all this learned jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter. The meaning then, good people, of all this is, *That government is governed by no principle whatever; that it can make evil good, or good evil, just as it pleases. In short, that government is arbitrary power.*

But there are some things which Mr. Burke has forgotten. *First*, He has not shewn where the wisdom originally came from: and, *secondly*, he has not shewn by what authority it first began to act. In the manner he introduces the matter, it is either government stealing wisdom, or wisdom stealing government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In short, it is usurpation.

Whether it be from a sense of shame, or from a consciousness of some radical defect in government necessary to be kept out of sight, or from both, or from any other cause, I undertake not to determine; but so it is, that a monarchical reasoner never traces government to its source, or from its source. It is one of the *shibboleths* by which he may be known. A thousand years hence, those who

shall live in America or in France, will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their governments, and say, *This was the work of our glorious ancestors!* But what can a monarchical talker say? What has he to exult in? Alas! he has nothing. A certain something forbids him to look back to a beginning, lest some robber or some Robin Hood should rise from the long obscurity of time, and say, *I am the origin.* Hard as Mr. Burke laboured the Regency Bill and hereditary succession two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he still had not boldness enough to bring up William of Normandy, and say, *There is the head of the list, there is the fountain of honour,* the son of a prostitute, and the plunderer of the English nation.

The opinions of men with respect to government, are changing fast in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expence of governments have provoked people to think, by making them feel: and when once the veil begins to rend it admits not of repair. Ignorance of a peculiar nature, once dispelled, and it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge; and though man may be *kept* ignorant, he cannot be *made* ignorant. The mind, in discovering truth, acts in the same manner as it acts through the eye in discovering objects; when once any object has been seen, it is impossible to put the mind back to the same condition it was in before it saw it. Those who talk of a

counter-revolution in France, shew how little they understand of man. There does not exist in the compass of language, an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means must be an obliteration of knowledge; and it has never yet been discovered, how to make man *unknow* his knowledge, or *unthink* his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is labouring in vain to stop the progress of knowledge; and it comes with the worse grace from him, as there is a certain transaction known in the city, which renders him suspected of being a pensioner in a fictitious name. This may account for some strange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the Revolution Society, is effectually directed against the whole Nation.

“The King of England,” says he, “holds *his* Crown (for it does not belong to the nation, according to Mr. Burke) in *contempt* of the choice of the Revolution Society, who have not a single vote for a King among them either *individually* or *collectively*; and his Majesty’s heirs, each in their time and order, will come to the Crown *with the same contempt* of their choice, with which his Majesty has succeeded to that which he now wears.”

As to who is king in England or elsewhere, or whether there is any king at all, or whether the people chuse a Cherokee Chief, or a Hessian Hussar for a King, is not a matter that I trouble myself about, be that to themselves; but with respect to the doctrine, so far as it relates to the Rights of Men and Nations, it is as

abominable as any thing ever uttered in the most enslaved country under heaven. Whether it sounds worse to my ear, by not being accustomed to hear such despotism, than what it does to the ear of another person, I am not so well a judge of; but of its abominable principle, I am at no loss to judge.

It is not the Revolution Society that Mr. Burke means; it is the Nation, as well in its *original* as in its *representative* character; and he has taken care to make himself understood, by saying that they have not a vote either *collectively* or *individually*. The Revolution Society is composed of citizens of all denominations, and of members of both the Houses of Parliament; and consequently, if there is not a right to a vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any either in the nation or in its parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country how it imports foreign families to be Kings. It is somewhat curious to observe, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about Kings, it is always a foreign house of Kings; hating foreigners, yet governed by them. It is now the House of Brunswick, one of the petty tribes of Germany.

It has hitherto been the practice of the English Parliaments to regulate what was called the succession, (taking it for granted, that the nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its government; for without this the parliament could not have had authority to have sent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impose a King upon the nation against its

will.) And this must be the utmost limit to which Parliament can go upon this case; but the right of the nation goes to the *whole* case, because it has the right of changing its *whole* form of government. The right of Parliament is only a right in trust, a right by delegation, and that but from a very small part of the nation; and one of its Houses has not even this. But the right of the nation is an original right, as universal as taxation. The nation is the paymaster of every thing, and every thing must conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a speech in what is called the English House of Peers, by the then Earl of Shelburne, and I think it was at the time he was Minister, which is applicable to this case. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular; but the words and the purport, as nearly as I remember, were those: *That the form of a Government was a matter wholly at the will of a Nation at all times: that if it chose a monarchical form, it had a right to have it so: and if it afterwards chose to be a Republic, it had a right to be a Republic, and to say to a King, we have no longer any occasion for you.*

When Mr. Burke says that “ His Majesty’s heirs and successors, each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the *same consent* of their choice with which His Majesty has succeeded to that he wears,” it is saying too much even to the humblest individual in the country; part of whose daily labour goes toward making up the million sterling a year, which the country gives the person it styles a King.

Government with insolence, is despotism; but when contempt is added, it becomes worse; and to pay for contempt, is the excess of slavery. This species of Government comes from Germany: and reminds me of what one of the Brunswick soldiers told me, who was taken prisoner by the Americans in the late war; "Ah!" said he, "America is a fine free country, it is worth the people's fighting for; I know the difference by knowing my own; in my country if the prince say, Eat straw, we eat straw."—God help that country, thought I, be it England or elsewhere, whose liberties are to be protected by German principles of government and princes of Brunswick.

As Mr. Burke sometimes speaks of England, sometimes of France, and sometimes of the world, and of government in general, it is difficult to answer his book without apparently meeting him on the same ground. Although principles of Government are general subjects, it is next to impossible in many cases to separate them from the idea of place and circumstance; and the more when circumstances are put for arguments, which is frequently the case with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his Book, addressing himself to the people of France, he says, "No experience has taught us, (meaning the English), that in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, can our liberties be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*." I ask Mr. Burke who is to take them away? M. de la Fayette, in speaking to France says, "*For a Nation to be*

free, it is sufficient that she wills it." But Mr. Burke represents England as wanting capacity to take care of itself; and that its liberties must be taken care of by a King, holding it in "contempt." If England is sunk to this, it is preparing itself to eat straw, as in Hanover or in Brunswick. But besides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all against Mr. Burke. It was by the government *being hereditary*, that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles the First, and James the Second, are instances of this truth; yet neither of them went so far as to hold the Nation in contempt.

As it is sometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to hear what those of other countries have to say respecting it, it is possible that the people of France may learn something from Mr. Burke's book, and that the people of England may also learn something from the answers it will occasion. When Nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that sustains the defeat obtains the prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were some production of nature; or as if, like time, it had a power to operate not only independent, but in spite of man; or as if it were a thing or a subject universally consented to. Alas! it has none of those properties, but is the reverse of them all. It is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the lega-

lity of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expressions can convey, it will be necessary to state the distinct heads under which (what is called) an hereditary crown, or, more properly speaking, an hereditary succession to the Government of a Nation, can be considered; which are,

First, The right of a particular family to establish itself.

Secondly, The right of a nation to establish a particular family.

With respect to the *first* of these heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority, and independent of the consent of a Nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism; and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

But the *second* head, that of a Nation establishing a particular family with *hereditary power*, it does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to others, which they reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism. When the person who at any time shall be in possession of a Government, or those who stand in succession to him, shall say to a Nation, I hold this power in "contempt" of you, it signifies not on what authority he pretends to say it. It is no relief,

but an aggravation to a person in slavery, to reflect that he was sold by his parent; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing.

In order to arrive at a more perfect decision on this head, it will be proper to consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with *hereditary powers* a-part and separate from the generations which are to follow; and also to consider the character in which the *first* generation acts with respect to succeeding generations.

The generation which first selects a person, and puts him at the head of its Government, either with the title of King, or any other distinction, acts its *own choice*, be it wise or foolish, as a free agent for itself. The person so set up is not hereditary, but selected and appointed; and the generation which sets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment. Were the generation who sets him up, and the person so set up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary succession; and, of consequence, hereditary succession can only follow on the death of the first parties.

As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the *first* generation, we have now to consider the character in which *that* generation acts with respect to the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

It assumes a character, to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itself from a *Legislator* to a *Testa-*

tor, and affects to make its Will, which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the Government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation, a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as is already observed, lived not under an hereditary Government, but under a Government of its own choice and establishment; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, (and which it has authority to make), to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itself acted.

But, exclusive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a testator, the objects to which it applies itself in this case are not within the compass of any law, or of any will or testament.

The rights of men in society, are neither deviseable nor transferable, nor annihilable, but are descendable only; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the descent. If the present generation, or any other, are disposed to be slaves, it does not lessen the right of the succeeding generation to be free: wrongs cannot have a legal descent. When Mr. Burke attempts to maintain, that the *English Nation did, at the Revolution of 1688, most solemnly renounce and abdicate their rights for themselves and for all their posterity for ever*; he speaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only excite contempt for his prostitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will

and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is an absurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary succession by law operates. A certain former generation made a will to take away the rights of the commencing generation and all future ones, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have *no rights*, that their rights are already bequeathed to him, and he will govern in *contempt* of them. From such principles, and such ignorance, Good Lord deliver the world!

But after all, what is this metaphor called a crown, or rather what is a monarch? Is it a thing, or is it a name, or is it a fraud? Is it "a contrivance of human wisdom," or of human craft to obtain money from a nation under pretences? Is it a thing necessary to a nation? If it is, in what does that necessity consist, what services does it perform; what is its business, and what are its merits? Doth the virtue consist in the metaphor, or in the man? Doth the goldsmith that makes the crown, make the virtue also? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wishing-cap, or Harlequin's wooden sword? Doth it make a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it? It appears to be something going much out of fashion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary and expensive. In America it is considered as an absurdity, and in France it has so far declined, that the goodness of the man, and the respect for his personal character, are the only

things that preserve the appearance of its existence.

If Government be what Mr. Burke describes it, "a contrivance of human wisdom," I might ask him, if wisdom was at such a low ebb in England, that it was become necessary to import it from Holland and from Hanover? But I will do the country the justice to say, that was not the case; and even if it was, it mistook the cargo. The wisdom of every country, when properly exerted, is sufficient for all its purposes; and there could exist no more real occasion in England to have sent for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector, than there was in America to have done a similar thing. If a country does not understand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to understand them; who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there existed a man so transcendently wise above all others, that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country, and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look round the world, and see that of all men in it, the race of kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason cannot fail to ask us—What are those men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not understand, I wish Mr. Burke would be so kind as to inform us. I see in America, a government extending over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity for a fortieth part of the expence which government costs in England. If I ask a man in Ame-

rica, if he wants a king? he retorts and asks me, if I take him for an idiot? How is it that this difference happens? are we more or less wise than others? I see in America, the generality of people living in a stile of plenty unknown in monarchical countries: and I see that the principle of its government, which is that of the *equal Rights of Man*, is making a rapid progress in the world.

If monarchy is a useless thing, why is it kept up any where? and if a necessary thing, how can it be dispensed with? That *civil government* is necessary, all civilized nations will agree in; but civil government is republican government. All that part of the government of England which begins with the office of constable, and proceeds through the department of magistrate, quarter-session, and general assize, including trial by jury, is republican government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the Conqueror imposed upon the English, that of obliging them to call him "Their Sovereign Lord the King."

It is easy to conceive, that a band of interested men, such as placemen, pensioners, Lords of the bed-chamber, Lords of the kitchen, Lords of the necessary-house, and the Lord knows what besides, can find as many reasons for monarchy as their salaries, paid at the expence of the country, amount to; but if I ask the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and down through all the occupations of life to the common labourer, what service monarchy is to him? he can give me no answer. If I ask what monarchy is, he believes it is something like a sinecure.

Notwithstanding the taxes of England amount to almost seventeen millions a-year, said to be for the expences of Government, it is still evident that the sense of the Nation is left to govern itself, and does govern itself by magistrates and juries, almost at its own charge, on republican principles, exclusive of the expence of taxes. The salaries of the Judges are almost the only charge that is paid out of the revenue. Considering that all the internal government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be the lightest of any nation in Europe; instead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the score of civil government, the subject necessarily extends itself to the monarchical part.

When the people of England sent for George the First, (and it would puzzle a wiser man than Mr. Burke to discover for what he could be wanted, or what service he could render), they ought at least to have conditioned for the abandonment of Hanover. Besides the endless German intrigues that must follow from a German Elector being King of England, there is a natural impossibility of uniting in the same person the principles of Freedom and the principles of Despotism, or as it is usually called in England, Arbitrary Power. A German Elector is in his electorate a despot: How then could it be expected that he should be attached to principles of liberty in one country, while his interest in another was to be supported by despotism? The union cannot exist; and it might easily have been foreseen, that German Electors would make German Kings, or, in Mr. Burke's words, would assume government with 'contempt.' The English have been in

the habit of considering a King of England only in the character in which he appears to them: whereas the same person, while the connection lasts, has a home-seat in another country, the interest of which is different to their own, and the principles of the government in opposition to each other.—To such a person England will appear as a town-residence, and the Electorate as the estate. The English may wish, as I believe they do, success to the principles of liberty in France, or in Germany; but a German elector trembles for the fate of despotism in his electorate; and the Duchy of Mecklenburgh, where the present Queen's family governs, is under the same wretched state of arbitrary power, and the people in slavish vassalage.

There never was a time when it became the English to watch continental intrigues more circumspectly than at the present moment, and to distinguish the politics of the Electorate from the politics of the Nation. The revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with respect to England and France, as nations: but the German despots, with Prussia at their head, are combining against Liberty; and the fondness of Mr. Pitt for office, and the interest which all his family-connections have obtained, do not give sufficient security against this intrigue.

As every thing which passes in the world becomes matter for history, I will now quit this subject, and take a concise review of the state of ^{parties} and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France.

Whether the present reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke: certain however it is, that it had strongly that appearance.

The animosity of the English Nation, it is very well remembered, ran high; and, had the true principles of Liberty been as well understood then as they now promise to be, it is probable the Nation would not have patiently submitted to so much. George the First and Second were sensible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts; and as they could not but consider themselves as standing on their good behaviour, they had prudence to keep their German principles of Government to themselves; but as the Stuart Family wore away, the prudence became less necessary.

The contest between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the Nation till some time after the conclusion of the American war, when all at once it fell a calm—Execration exchanged itself for applause, and Court popularity sprung up like a mushroom in a night.

To account for this sudden transition, it is proper to observe, that there are two distinct species of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by resentment. As the Nation had formed itself into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions for and against prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general shock than an immediate coalition of the champions themselves. The partisans of each being thus suddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with disgust at the measure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration against both. A higher stimulus of resentment being thus excited, than what the contest on prerogatives had occasioned, the Nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and sought only that of gratification. The indignation of the Coalition, so effectually superseded

the indignation against the Court, as to extinguish it; and without any change of principles on the part of the Court, the same people who had reprobated its despotism, united with it, to revenge themselves on the Coalition Parliament. The case was not, which they liked best—but, which they hated most; and the least hated passed for loved. The dissolution of the Coalition Parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the resentment of the Nation, could not fail to be popular; and from hence arose the popularity of the Court.

Transitions of this kind exhibit a Nation under the government of temper, instead of a fixed and steady principle; and having once committed itself, however rashly, it feels itself urged along to justify by continuance its first proceeding. Measures which at other times it would censure, it now approves, and acts persuasion upon itself to suffocate its judgment.

On the return of a new Parliament, the new Minister Mr. Pitt, found himself in a secure majority: and the Nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himself, but because it had resolved to do it out of resentment to another. He introduced himself to public notice by a proposed reform of parliament, which in its operation would have amounted to a public justification of corruption. The Nation was to be at the expence of buying up the rotten boroughs, whereas it ought to punish the persons who deal in the traffic.

Passing over the two bubbles, of the Dutch business, and the million a-year to sink the national debt, the matter which next presents itself, is the affair of the Regency. Never in the course of my observation was delusion more successfully acted, nor a nation more completely deceived,—

But, to make this appear, it will be necessary to go over the circumstances.

Mr. Fox had stated in the House of Commons, that the Prince of Wales, as heir in succession, had a right in himself to assume the government. This was opposed by Mr. Pitt; and, so far as the opposition was confined to the doctrine, it was just. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary side, were as bad, or worse in their extent, than those of Mr. Fox; because they went to establish an aristocracy over the Nation, and over the small representation it has in the House of Commons.

Whether the English form of Government be good or bad, is not in this case the question; but taking it as it stands, without regard to its merits or demerits, Mr. Pitt was farther from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is supposed to consist of three parts;—while, therefore, the Nation is disposed to continue this form; the parts have a *national standing*, independent of each other, and are not the creature of each other. Had Mr. Fox passed through Parliament, and said that the person alluded to claimed on the ground of the Nation, Mr. Pitt must then have contended (what he called) the right of the Parliament, against the right of the Nation.

By the appearance which the contest made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt the parliamentary ground: but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worst of the two.

What is called the Parliament, is made up of two Houses; one of

which is more hereditary, and more beyond the controul of the Nation, than what the Crown (as it is called) is supposed to be. It is an hereditary aristocracy, assuming and asserting indefeasible irrevocable rights and authority, wholly independent of the Nation. Where then was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power less independent of the Nation than what itself assumed to be, and of absorbing the rights of the Nation into a House over which it has neither election nor controul?

The general impulse of the Nation was right; but it acted without reflection. It approved the opposition made to the right set up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was supporting another indefeasible right, more remote from the Nation, in opposition to it.

With respect to the House of Commons, it is elected but by a small part of the Nation; but were the election as universal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would still be only the organ of the Nation, and cannot possess inherent rights.—When the National Assembly of France resolves a matter, the resolve is made in right of the Nation; but Mr. Pitt, on all national questions, so far as they refer to the House of Commons, absorbs the rights of the Nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a Nation, and the Nation itself into a cypher.

In a few words, the question on the Regency was a question on a million a-year, which is appropriated to the executive department: and Mr. Pitt could not possess himself of any management of this sum, without setting up the supremacy of Parliament; and when this was accom-

plished, it was indifferent who should be Regent, as he must be Regent at his own cost. Among the curiosities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the Great Seal into a King; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority. If, therefore, Royal authority is a Great Seal, it consequently is in itself nothing; and a good Constitution would be of infinitely more service to the Nation, than what the three Nominal Powers, as they now stand, are worth.

The continual use of the word *Constitution* in the English Parliament shews there is none; and that the whole is merely a form of Government without a Constitution, and constituting itself with what powers it pleases. If there were a Constitution, it certainly could be referred to; and the debate on any constitutional point would terminate by producing the Constitution. One member says, This is Constitution; another says, That is Constitution—To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow, is something else—while the maintaining the debate proves there is none. Constitution is now the cant word of Parliament, tuning itself to the ear of the Nation. Formerly it was the *universal supremacy of Parliament*—the *omnipotence of Parliament*: But, since the progress of Liberty in France, those phrases have a despotic harshness in their note; and the English Parliament have caught the fashion from the National Assembly, but without the substance, of speaking of *Constitution*.

As the present generation of people in England did not make the Government, they are not accountable for any of its defects; but that sooner or later it must come into their

hands to undergo a constitutional reformation, is as certain as that the same thing has happened in France. If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions sterling, with an extent of rich and fertile country above four times larger than England, with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to support taxation, with upwards of ninety millions sterling of gold and silver circulating in the nation, and with a debt less than the present debt of England—still found it necessary, from whatever cause, to come to a settlement of its affairs, it solves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the question to say how long, what is called, the English constitution, has lasted, and to argue from thence how long it is to last; the question is, how long can the funding system last? It is a thing but of a modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man; yet in that short space it has so far accumulated, that, together with the current expences, it requires an amount of taxes at least equal to the whole landed rental of the nation in acres to defray the annual expenditures. That a Government could not always have gone on by the same system which has been followed for the last seventy years, must be evident to every man; and for the same reason it cannot always go on.

The funding system is not money; neither is it, properly speaking, credit. It, in effect, creates upon paper the sum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of interest, and sends the annuity to market, to be sold for paper already in circulation. If any credit

is given, it is to the disposition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the Government which lays it on. When this disposition expires, what is supposed to be the credit of Government expires with it. The instance of France, under the former Government, shews that it is impossible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole nation is determined to take its stand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, states the quantity of gold and silver in France, at about eighty-eight millions sterling. In doing this he has, I presume, divided by the difference of exchange, instead of the standard of twenty-four livres to a pound sterling; for M. Neckar's statement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is *two thousand two hundred millions of livres*, which is upwards of ninety-one millions and an half sterling.

M. Neckar in France, and Mr. George Chalmers of the office of Trade and Plantation in England, of which Lord Hawkesbury is president, published nearly about the same time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each nation, from the returns of the Mint of each nation. Mr. Chalmers, from the returns of the English Mint at the Tower of London, states the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions sterling*.

M. Neckar † says, that the amount of money in France, recoined from the old coin which was called in, was two thousand five hundred millions of livres, (upwards of one hun-

dred and four millions sterling): and after deducting for waste, and what may be in the West Indies, and other possible circumstances, states the circulating quantity at home, to be ninety-one millions and an half sterling; but, taking it as Mr. Burke has put it, it is sixty-eight millions more than the national quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this sum, may at once be seen from the state of the French Revenue, without referring to the records of the French Mint for proofs. The revenue of France, prior to the Revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions sterling; and as paper had then no existence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and silver; and it would have been impossible to have collected such a quantity of revenue upon a less national quantity than M. Neckar has stated. Before the establishment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount in gold and silver: as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to King William, and the quantity of money stated to be in the nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real service to a Nation, to impose upon itself, or to permit itself to be imposed upon; but the prejudices of some, and the imposition of others, have always represented France as a nation possessing but little money—whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is considerably greater on

* See *Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain*, by George Chalmers.

† See *Administration of the Finances of France*, Vol. III. by M. Neckar.

a proportion of numbers. To account for this deficiency on the part of England, some reference should be had to the English system of funding. It operates to multiply paper, and to substitute it in the room of money, in various shapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the specie; and it admits of a possibility (by extending it to small notes) of increasing paper, till there is no money left.

I know this is not a pleasant subject to English readers; but the matters I am going to mention, are so important in themselves, as to require the attention of men interested in money transactions of a public nature.—There is a circumstance stated by M. Neckar, in his treatise on the administration of the finances, which has never been attended to in England, but which forms the only basis whereon to estimate the quantity of money (gold and silver) which ought to be in every nation in Europe, to preserve a relative proportion with other nations.

Lisbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and silver from South America are imported, and which, afterwards divides and spreads itself over Europe by means of commerce, and increases the quantity of money in all parts of Europe. If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the foreign commerce of the several nations by which it is distributed can be ascertained, they give a rule, sufficiently true, to ascertain the quantity of money which

ought to be found in any nation at any given time.

M. Neckar shews, from the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz, that the importation of gold and silver into Europe, is five millions sterling annually.—He has not taken it on a single year, but on an average of fifteen succeeding years, from 1763 to 1777, both inclusive; in which time, the amount was one thousand eight hundred million livres, which is seventy-five millions sterling*.

From the commencement of the Hanover succession in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers published, is seventy-two years; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and sixty millions sterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great Britain be stated a sixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to, (which is probably an inferior estimation to what the gentlemen at the Exchange would allow) the proportion to which Britain should draw by commerce of this sum, to keep herself on a proportion with the rest of Europe, would be also a sixth part, which is sixty millions, sterling; and if the same allowance for waste and accident be made for England which M. Neckar makes for France, the quantity remaining after these deductions would be fifty-two millions; and this sum ought to have been in the nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers published) in addition to the sum which was in the nation at the commencement of the Hanover succession, and to have made in the whole at least sixty-six millions, sterling; instead of which;

* Administration of the Finances of France, Vol. III.

there were but twenty millions which is forty-six millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and silver imported into Lisbon and Cadiz is more exactly ascertained than that of any commodity imported into England; and as the quantity of money coined at the Tower of London is still more positively known, the leading facts do not admit of controversy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit, or the gold and silver which it brings in leak continually away by unseen

means, at the average rate of about three quarters of a million a-year, which, in the course of seventy two years, accounts for the deficiency, and its absence is supplied by paper*.

The Revolution of France is attended with many novel circumstances, not only in the political sphere but in the circle of money transactions. Among others it shews that a Government may be in a state of insolvency, and a Nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late Government of France, it was insolvent; because the Nation would no

* Whether the English commerce does not bring in money, or whether the Government sends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can best explain; but that the deficiency exists, is not in the power of either to disprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden (now Auckland), Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money in England was greater or less than at the Revolution, the circumstance was not adverted to, that since the Revolution, there cannot have been less than four hundred millions sterling imported into Europe; and therefore, the quantity in England ought at least to have been four times greater than it was at the Revolution, to be on a proportion with Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what she would have been able to have done by solid money, if gold and silver had come into the nation in the proportion it ought; or had been sent out; and she is endeavouring to restore, by paper, the balance she has lost by money. It is certain, that the gold and silver which arrive annually in the register-ships to Spain and Portugal, do not remain in those countries. Taking the value half in gold and half in silver, it is about four hundred tons annually; and from the number of ships and galleons employed in the trade of bringing those metals from South America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity sufficiently proves itself, without referring to the registers.

In the situation England now is, it is impossible she can increase in money. High taxes not only lessen the property of the individuals, but they lessen also the money capital of a nation, by inducing smuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and silver. By the politics which the British Government have carried on with the Inland Powers of Germany and the Continent, it has made an enemy of all the Maritime Powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy; but though the navy is built in England, the naval stores must be purchased from abroad, and that from countries where the greatest part must be paid for in gold and silver. Some fallacious rumours have been set afloat in England to induce a belief of money, and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is silver; and it would take upwards of twenty of the largest broad-wheel waggon, with ten horses each, to remove one million sterling of silver. Is it then to be supposed, that a few people fleeing on horse-back, or in post-chaises, in a secret manner, and having the French Custom-House to pass, and the sea to cross, could bring even a sufficiency for their own expences?

When millions of money are spoken of, it should be recollected, that such sums can only accumulate in a country by slow degrees, and a long succession of time. The most frugal system that England could now adopt, would not recover in a century the balance she has lost in money since the commencement of the Hanover succession. She is seventy millions behind France, and she must be in some considerable proportion behind every country in Europe, because the returns of the English Mint do not shew an increase of money, while the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz shew a European increase of between three and four hundred millions sterling.

longer support its extravagance, and therefore it could no longer support itself—but with respect to the Nation, all the means existed. A Government may be said to be insolvent, every time it applies to a Nation to discharge its arrears. The insolvency of the late Government of France, and the present Government of England, differed in no other respect than as the disposition of the people differ. The people of France refused their aid to the old Government; and the people of England submit to taxation without enquiry. What is called the Crown in England, has been insolvent several times; the last of which, publicly known, was in May 1777, when it applied to the Nation to discharge upwards of £600,000. private debts, which otherwise it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all those who were unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French Nation with the French Government. The French Nation, in effect, endeavoured to render the late Government insolvent, for the purpose of taking government into its own hands; and it reserved its means for the support of the new Government. In a country of such vast extent and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting; and the political means appear the instant the Nation is disposed to permit them. When Mr. Burke, in a speech last Winter in the British Parliament, *cast his eyes over the map of Europe, and saw a chasm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The same natural France existed as before, and all the natural means existed with it. The only chasm was that which the extinction of despotism had left, and which was to be filled up with a constitution

more formidable in resources than the power which had expired.

Although the French Nation rendered the late Government insolvent, it did not permit the insolvency to act towards the creditors; and the creditors considering the Nation as the real paymaster, and the Government only as the agent, rested themselves on the Nation, in preference to the Government. This appears greatly to disturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy by which Governments have supposed themselves secure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied interests of a Nation to their support; but the example in France shews, that the permanent security of the creditor is in the Nation, and not in the Government; and that in all possible revolutions that may happen in Governments, the means are always with the Nation, and the Nation always in existence. Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to have abided the fate of the Government which they trusted; but the National Assembly considered them as the creditors of the Nation, and not of the Government—of the master, and not of the steward.

Notwithstanding the late Government could not discharge the current expences, the present Government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accomplished by two means; the one by lessening the expences of Government, and the other by the sale of the monastic and ecclesiastical landed estates. The devotees and penitent debauchees, extortioners and misers of former days, to ensure themselves a better world than that which they were about to leave, had bequeathed immense property in trust to the priesthood, for

pious uses: and the priesthood kept it for themselves. The National Assembly has ordered it to be sold for the good of the whole Nation, and the priesthood to be decently provided for.

In consequence of the Revolution, the annual interest of the debt of France will be reduced at least six millions sterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital; which, with lessening the former expences of Government at least three millions, will place France in a situation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the subject, how vast is the contrast! While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the National Assembly has been paying off the capital of its debt; and while taxes have increased near a million a-year in England, they have lowered several millions a-year in France. Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt said about French affairs, or the state of the French finances, in the present Session of Parliament. The subject begins to be too well understood, and imposition serves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's Book. He writes in a rage against the National Assembly; but what is he enraged about? If his assertions were as true as they are groundless,

and that France by her Revolution had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a *chasm*, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman, (considering himself as a national man,) and provoke his rage against the National Assembly: but why should it excite the rage of Mr. Burke?—Alas! it is not the Nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the COURT; and every Court in Europe, dreading the same fate, is in mourning. He writes neither in the character of a Frenchman nor an Englishman, but in the fawning character of that creature known in all countries, and friend to none, a COURTIER. Whether it be the Court of Versailles, or the Court of St. James or of Carlton-House, or the Court in expectation, signifies not; for the caterpillar principle of all Courts and Courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and separate from the interest of Nations; and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a Court or a Courtier than the Revolution of France. That which is a blessing to Nations, is bitterness to them; and as their existence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.

C O N C L U S I O N.

REASON and Ignorance, the opposites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of these can be rendered sufficiently extensive in a country, the machinery of

Government goes easily on. Reason obeys itself; and Ignorance submits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of Government which prevail in the world, are, *first*,

Government by election and representation: *Secondly*, Government by hereditary succession. The former is generally known by the name of republic: the latter by that of monarchy and aristocracy.

Those two distinct and opposite forms, erect themselves on the two distinct and opposite bases of Reason and Ignorance.—As the exercise of Government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary descent, it is evident that hereditary succession requires a belief from man, to which his reason cannot subscribe, and which can only be established upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this species of government.

On the contrary, Government in a well constituted republic, requires no belief from man beyond what his reason can give. He sees the *rationale* of the whole system, its origin and its operation; and as it is best supported when best understood, the human faculties act with boldness, and acquire, under this form of Government, a gigantic manliness.

As, therefore, each of those forms acts on a different base, the one moving freely by the aid of reason, the other by ignorance; we have next to consider, what it is that gives motion to that species of Government which is called mixed Government, or, as it is sometimes ludicrously stiled, a Government of *this, that* and *the other*.

The moving power in this species of Government is, of necessity, Corruption. However imperfect election and representation may be in mixed Governments, they still give exercise to a greater portion of reason than is convenient to the hereditary Part;

and therefore it becomes necessary to buy the reason up. A mixed Government is an imperfect every thing, cementing and foldering the discordant parts together by corruption, to act as a whole. Mr. Burke appears highly disgusted, that France, since she had resolved on a revolution, did not adopt what he calls “*A British Constitution* ;” and the regretful manner in which he expresses himself on this occasion, implies a suspicion, that the British Constitution needed something to keep its defects in countenance.

In mixed Governments there is no responsibility: the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives, at the same time, its own escape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that *a King can do no wrong*, it places him in a state of similar security with that of idiots and persons insane, and responsibility is out of the question with respect to himself. It then descends upon the Minister, who shelters himself under a majority in Parliament, which, by places, pensions, and corruption, he can always command; and that majority justifies itself by the same authority with which it protects the Minister. In this rotatory motion, responsibility is thrown off from the parts and from the whole.

When there is a Part in a Government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power, by whose advice and direction it acts. What is supposed to be the King in mixed Governments, is the Cabinet; and as the Cabinet is always a part of the Parliament, and the numbers justifying in one character what they advise and act in another, a mixed Government becomes a continual enig-

ma ; entailing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption necessary to solder the parts, the expence of supporting all the forms of Government at once, and finally resolving itself into a government by Committee ; in which the advisers, the actors, the approvers, the justifiers, the persons responsible, and the persons not responsible, are the same persons.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of scene and character, the parts help each other out in matters which neither of them singly would assume to act. When money is to be obtained, the mass of variety apparently dissolves, and a profusion of parliamentary praises passes between the parts. Each admires with astonishment the wisdom, the liberality, the disinterestedness of the other ; and all of them breathe a pitying sigh at the burthens of the Nation.

But in a well constituted republic, nothing of this foldering, praising, and pitying can take place ; the representation being equal throughout the country, and compleat in itself, however it may be arranged into legislative and executive, they have all one and the same natural source. The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy. As there are no discordant distinctions, there is no-

thing to corrupt by compromise, nor confound by contrivance. Public measures appeal of themselves to the understanding of the Nation, and, resting on their own merits, disown any flattering application to vanity. The continual whine of lamenting the burthen of taxes, however successfully it may be practised in mixed Governments, is inconsistent with the sense and spirit of a republic. If taxes are necessary, they are of course advantageous ; but if they require an apology, the apology itself implies an impeachment. Why then is man thus imposed upon, or why does he impose upon himself ?

When men are spoken of as kings and subjects, or when Government is mentioned under distinct or combined heads of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, what is it that *reasoning* man is to understand by the terms ? If there really existed in the world two or more distinct and separate *elements* of human power, we should then see the several origins to which those terms would descriptively apply : but as there is but one species of man, there can be but one element of human power : and that element is man himself. Monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy are but creatures of imagination ; and a thousand such may be contrived as well as three.

From the Revolutions of America and France, and the symptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident that the opinion of the world is changing with respect to systems of Government, and that revolutions are not within the compass of political calculations. The pro-

gress of time and circumstances, which men assign to the accomplishment of great changes, is too mechanical to measure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which revolutions are generated : All the old governments have received a shock from those that already

appear, and which were once more improbable, and are a greater subject of wonder, than a general revolution in Europe would be now.

When we survey the wretched condition of man under the monarchical and hereditary systems of Government, dragged from his home by one power or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and construction of Governments is necessary.

What is government more than the management of the affairs of a Nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole community, at whose expence it is supported; and though by force or contrivance it has been usurped into an inheritance, the usurpation cannot alter the right of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right appertains to the Nation only, and not to any individual, and a Nation has at all times an inherent indefeasible right to abolish any form of Government it finds inconvenient, and establish such as accords with its interest, disposition, and happiness. The romantic and barbarous distinctions of men into Kings and subjects, though it may suit the condition of courtiers, cannot that of citizens, and is exploded by the principle upon which Governments are now founded. Every citizen is a member of the Sovereignty, and, as such, can acknowledge no personal subjection; and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what Government is, they must necessarily sup-

pose it to possess a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exercised. In this view of Government, the republican system, as established by America and France, operates to embrace the whole of a Nation; and the knowledge necessary to the interest of all the parts, is to be found in the center, which the parts by representation form: But the old governments are on a construction that excludes knowledge as well as happiness; Government by Monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a Convent, is as consistent as Government by Kings.

What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more than change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose and fell like things of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world, from the Revolutions of America and France, are a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity.

I. Men are born and always continue free, and equal in respect to their rights. Civil distinctions therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.

III. The Nation is essentially the source of all Sovereignty; nor can any INDIVIDUAL, or ANY BODY

‘ OF MEN, *be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.*’

In these principles, there is nothing to throw a Nation into confusion by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wisdom and abilities, and to exercise them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular descriptions of men or families. Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and the source of misery, is abolished; and sovereignty itself is restored to its natural and original place, the Nation. Were this the case throughout Europe, the cause of wars would be taken away.

It is attributed to Henry the Fourth of France, a man of an enlarged and benevolent heart, that he proposed, about the year 1620, a plan for abolishing war in Europe. The plan consisted in constituting a European Congress, or as the French Authors stile it, a Pacific Republic; by appointing delegates from the several Nations, who were to act as a Court of Arbitration in any disputes that might arise between nation and nation.

Had such a plan been adopted at the time it was proposed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at least ten millions sterling annually to each Nation less than they were at the commencement of the French Revolution.

To conceive a cause why such a plan has not been adopted, (and that instead of a Congress for the purpose of *preventing* war, it has been called only to *terminate* a war, after a fruitless expence of several years), it will be necessary to consider the interest of Governments as a distinct interest to that of Nations,

Whatever is the cause of taxes to a Nation, becomes also the means of revenue to a Government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and consequently with an addition of revenue; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the power and interest of Governments are increased. War, therefore, from its productiveness, as it easily furnishes the pretence of necessity for taxes and appointments to places and offices, becomes a principal part of the system of old Governments; and to establish any mode to abolish war, however advantageous it might be to Nations, would be to take from such Government the most lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, shew the disposition and avidity of Governments to uphold the system of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not Republics plunged into war, but because the nature of their Government does not admit an interest distinct to that of the Nation? Even Holland, though an ill-constructed Republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, existed nearly a century without war: and the instant the form of Government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace and domestic prosperity and œconomy arose with the new Government; and the same consequences would follow the same causes in other Nations.

As war is the system of Government on the old construction, the animosity which Nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their Governments excite, to keep up the spirit of the system. Each Government accuses the

other of perfidy, intrigue, and ambition, as a means of heating the imagination of their respective Nations, and incensing them to hostilities. Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a false system of Government. Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against the ambition of Kings, the exclamation should be directed against the principle of such Governments; and instead of seeking to reform the individual, the wisdom of a Nation should apply itself to reform the system.

Whether the forms and maxims of Governments which are still in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world at the period they were established, is not in this case the question. The older they are, the less correspondence can they have with the present state of things. Time, and change of circumstances and opinions, have the same progressive effect in rendering modes of Government obsolete, as they have upon customs and manners.—Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the tranquil arts, by which the prosperity of Nations is best promoted, require a different system of Government, and

a different species of knowledge to direct its operations, to what might have been the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened state of mankind, that hereditary Governments are verging to their decline, and that Revolutions on the broad basis of national sovereignty, and Government by representation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wisdom to anticipate their approach, and produce Revolutions by reason and accommodation, rather than commit them to the issue of convulsions.

From what we now see, nothing of reform in the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of Revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for. The intrigue of Courts, by which the system of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of Nations to abolish it: and a European Congress to patronize the progress of free Government, and promote the civilization of Nations with each other, is an event nearer in probability, than once were the revolutions and alliance of France and America.

P A I N E ' S W O R K S .

TO

M. D E L A F A Y E T T E .

AFTER an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult situations in America, and various consultations in Europe, I feel a pleasure in presenting to you this small treatise, in gratitude for your services to my beloved America, and as a testimony of my esteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to possess.

The only point upon which I could ever discover that we differed, was not as to principles of government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to push them on too fast. That which you suppose accomplishable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much shorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to understand their true interest, provided it be presented clearly to their understanding, and that in a manner not to create suspicion by any thing like self-design, nor offend by assuming too much. Where we would wish to reform we must not reproach.

When the American revolution was established, I felt a disposition to sit serenely down and enjoy the calm. It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards arise great enough to make me quit tranquillity, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle, and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find, is every where the same.

I am now once more in the public world, and as I have not a right to contemplate on so many years of remaining life as you have, I am resolved to labour as fast as I can; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wish you to hasten your principles, and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the ensuing spring, which it is most probable there will be no occasion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of all Germany. When France shall be surrounded with revolutions, she will be in peace and safety, and her taxes, as well as those of Germany, will consequently become less.

Your sincere,

Affectionate Friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

P R E F A C E.

WHEN I began the chapter entitled the *Conclusion* in the former part of the RIGHTS OF MAN, published last year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in casting the whole matter in my mind which I wished to add, I found that I must either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much. I therefore brought it to a close as soon as the subject would admit, and reserved what I had further to say to another opportunity.

Several other reasons contributed to produce this determination. I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression different to what had been customary in England, would be received before I proceeded farther. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French Revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous opposition thereto brought the controversy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would contest with him, because they are principles I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to establish, and conceive myself bound to defend. Had he not urged the controversy, I had most probably been a silent man.

Another reason for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promised in his first publication to renew the subject at another opportunity, and to make a comparison of what he called the English and French Constitutions. I therefore held myself in reserve for him. He has published two works since, without doing this; which he certainly would not have omitted, had the comparison been in his favour.

In his last work, "*His appeal from the new to the old Whigs*," he has quoted about ten pages from the *Rights of Man*, and having given himself the trouble of doing this, says, "he shall not attempt in the smallest degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke to know, that he would if he could. But instead of contesting them, he immediately after consoles himself with saying, that "he has done his part." —He has not done his part. He has not performed his promise of a comparison of constitutions. He started the controversy, he gave the

challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *case in point* with his own opinion, that "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the substance of his last work, his "*Appeal*," is his condemnation. Principles must stand on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the shelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, serves to bring them into suspicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honours, but in this case he is artfully dividing the disgrace.

But who are those to whom Mr. Burke has made his appeal? A set of childish thinkers and half-way politicians born in the last century; men who went no farther with any principle than as it suited their purpose as a party; the nation was always left out of the question; and this has been the character of every party from that day to this. The nation sees nothing in such works, or such politics worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it must be something great that moves a nation.

Though I see nothing in Mr. Burke's appeal worth taking much notice of, there is, however, one expression upon which I shall offer a few remarks.—After quoting largely from the *Rights of Man*, and declining to contest the principles contained in that work, he says, "This will most probably be done (*if such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of criminal justice*) by others, who may think with Mr. Burke and with the same zeal."

In the first place it has not yet been done by any body. Not less, I believe, than eight or ten pamphlets intended as answers to the former part of the "*Rights of Man*" have been published by different persons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to a second edition, nor are even the titles of them so much as generally remembered. As I am averse to unnecessarily multiplying publications, I have answered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himself out of reputation when nobody else can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I would decline unnecessary publications on the one hand, so would I avoid every thing that might appear like swollen pride on the other. If Mr. Burke or any person on his side the question, will produce an answer to the "*Rights of Man*," that shall extend to an half, or even to a fourth part of the number of copies to which the *Rights of Man* extended, I will reply to his work. But until this be done, I shall so far take the sense of the public for my guide (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to answer. I suppose the number of copies to which the first part of the *Rights of Man* extend-

ed, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not less than between forty and fifty thousand.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

“If,” says he, “such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of *criminal* justice.”

Pardoning the pun, it must be *criminal* justice indeed that should condemn a work as a substitute for not being able to refute it. The greatest condemnation that could be passed upon it would be a refutation. But in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would, in the final event, pass upon the criminality of the process and not upon the work, and in this case, I had rather be the author, than be either the judge or the jury that should condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from some professional gentlemen on the subject of prosecutions, and I since find they are falling into my opinion, which I will here state as fully, but as concisely as I can.

I will first put a case with respect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a constitution.

It would be an act of despotism, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit investigating the principles, good or bad, on which such a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppose the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expose its errors, to reason on its defects, and to shew cause why it should be repealed, or why another ought to be substituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it also my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time of every argument to shew its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a discretionary violation of those which are good.

The case is the same with respect to principles and forms of government, or to what are called constitutions and the parts of which they are composed.

It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be established, and that mankind are at the expence of supporting it. The defects of every government and constitution, both as to principle and form must, on a parity of reasoning, be as open to discussion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to society to

point them out. When those defects, and the means of remedying them are generally seen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its constitution in the one case, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of government is restricted to the making and the administering of laws; but it is to a nation that the right of forming or reforming, generating or regenerating constitutions and governments belong; and consequently those subjects, as subjects of investigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of that country be made subjects for prosecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he pleases. It is better that the whole argument should come out, than to seek to stifle it. It was himself that opened the controversy, and he ought not to desert it.

I do not believe that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe. If better reasons can be shewn for them than against them, they will stand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read; and publications that go no farther than to investigate principles of government, to invite men to reason and to reflect, and to shew the errors and excellences of different systems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of a prosecution; and if they do, the prosecution will amount to nothing, since it cannot amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a sentence on the public, instead of the author, and would also be the most effectual mode of making or hastening revolutions.

On all cases that apply universally to a nation, with respect to systems of government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witnesses to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public, and the merits or demerits of it resting on their opinion; and where there is nothing to be known in a court but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men is equally as good a jury as the other, and would most probably reverse each other's verdict; or from the variety of their opinions, not to be able to form one. It is one case, whether a nation approve a work, or a plan; but it is quite another case, whether it will commit to any such jury the power of determining whether that nation have a right to, or shall reform its government, or not. I mention those cases, that Mr. Burke may see I have not written on Government without reflecting on what is Law, as well as on what are Rights.—The only effectual jury in such cases would be, a convention of the whole nation fairly elected; for in all such cases the whole na-

tion is the vicinage. If Mr. Burke will propose such a jury, I will waive all privileges of being the citizen of another country, and, defending its principles, abide the issue, provided he will do the same; for my opinion is, that his work and his principles would be condemned instead of mine.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favour of any particular form or system of government, those prejudices have yet to stand the test of reason and reflection. In fact, such prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favour of a thing, knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief of its being right; and when he sees it is not so, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be said, that until men think for themselves the whole is prejudice, and *not opinion*; for that only is opinion which is the result of reason and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what has been the customary prejudices of the country.

I do not believe that the people of England have ever been fairly and candidly dealt by. They have been imposed upon by parties, and by men assuming the character of leaders. It is time that the nation should rise above those trifles. It is time to dismiss that inattention which has so long been the encouraging cause of stretching taxation to excess. It is time to dismiss all those songs and toasts which are calculated to enslave, and operate to suffocate reflection. On all such subjects men have but to think, and they will neither act wrong nor be misled. To say that any people are not fit for freedom, is to make poverty their choice, and to say they had rather be loaded with taxes than not. If such a case could be proved, it would equally prove, that those who govern are not fit to govern them, for they are a part of the same national mass.

But admitting governments to be changed all over Europe; it certainly may be done without convulsion or revenge. It is not worth making changes or revolutions, unless it be for some great national benefit; and when this shall appear to a nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to those who oppose; and with this reflection I close my preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

R I G H T S of M A N, &c.

P A R T II.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

WHAT Archimedes said of the mechanical powers, may be applied to Reason and Liberty: "*Had we,*" said he, "*a place to stand upon, we might raise the world.*"

The revolution of America presented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and so effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. The sun needs no inscription to distinguish him from darkness; and no sooner did the American governments display themselves to the world, than despotism felt a shock, and man began to contemplate redress.

The independence of America, considered merely as a separation from England, would have been a matter

but of little importance, had it not been accompanied by a revolution in the principles and practice of governments. She made a stand, not for herself only, but for the world, and looked beyond the advantages herself could receive. Even the Hessian, though hired to fight against her, may live to bless his defeat: and England, condemning the viciousness of its government, rejoice in its miscarriage.

As America was the only spot in the political world, where the principles of universal reformation could begin, so also was it the best in the natural world. An assemblage of circumstances conspired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The scene which that country presents to the eye of a spectator, has something in it which generates and encourages great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatness he contemplates.—Its first settlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diversified professions of religion, retiring from the governmental persecutions of the

old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which necessarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderness produced among them a state of society, which countries long harassed by the quarrels and intrigues of governments, had neglected to cherish. In such a situation man becomes what he ought. He sees his species, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred; and the example shews to the artificial world, that man must go back to Nature for information.

From the rapid progress which America makes in every species of improvement, it is rational to conclude, that if the governments of Asia, Africa, and Europe, had begun on a principle similar to that of America, or had not been very early corrupted therefrom, that those countries must by this time have been in a far superior condition to what they are. Age after age has passed away, for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness.—Could we suppose a spectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his observations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, just struggling with the difficulties and hardships of an infant settlement. He could not suppose that the hordes of miserable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than those who had not yet had time to provide for themselves. Little would he think they were the consequence of what in such countries is called government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at those which are in an advanced stage of improvement, we still find the greedy

hand of government thrusting itself into every corner and crevice of industry, and grasping the spoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exercised, to furnish new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches prosperity as its prey, and permits none to escape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun, (and as the probability is always greater against a thing beginning, than of proceeding after it has begun) it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and still increasing expences with which old governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in or provoke, the embarrassments they throw in the way of universal civilization and commerce, and the oppression and usurpation they act at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhausted the property of the world. In such a situation, and with the examples already existing, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become subjects of universal conversation, and may be considered as the *Order of the day*.

If systems of government can be introduced, less expensive, and more productive of general happiness, than those which have existed, all attempts to oppose their progress will in the end be fruitless. Reason, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in a combat with interest. If universal peace, civilization, and commerce, are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the system of governments. All the monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, plunder and revenue their objects. While such governments continue, peace has not the absolute

security of a day. What is the history of all monarchical governments, but a disgusting picture of human wretchedness, and the accidental respite of a few years repose? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they sat down to rest and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that Heaven intended for man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the sins of the Jews.

The revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that interested the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of persons and measures but not of principles, and rose or fell among the common transactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution*." Conquest and tyranny, at some early period, dispossessed man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of all human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, so also is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory*, on a *system of universal peace*, on the *indefeatable hereditary Rights of Man*, is now revolving from west to east, by a stronger impulse than the government of the sword revolved from east to west. It interests not particular individuals, but nations, in its

progress, and promises a new æra to the human race.

The danger to which the success of revolutions is most exposed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to result from them, are sufficiently seen and understood. Almost every thing appertaining to the circumstances of a nation, has been absorbed and confounded under the general and mysterious word *government*. Though it avoids taking to its account the errors it commits, and the mischiefs it occasions, it fails not to arrogate to itself whatever has the appearance of prosperity. It robs industry of its honours, by pedantically making itself the cause of its effects; and purloins from the general character of man, the merits that appertain to him as a social being.

It may therefore be of use, in this day of revolutions, to discriminate between those things which are the effect of government, and those which are not. This will best be done by taking a review of society and civilization, and the consequences resulting therefrom, as things distinct from what are called governments. By beginning with this investigation, we shall be able to assign effects to their proper cause, and analyze the mass of common errors.

C H A P. I.

Of Society and Civilization.

GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It has its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost every thing which is ascribed to government.

To understand the nature and quantity of government proper for man, it is necessary to attend to his character. As Nature created him for social life, she fitted him for the station she intended. In all cases she made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a center.

But she has gone further. She has not only forced man into society

by a diversity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can supply, but she has implanted in him a system of social affections, which, though not necessary to his existence, are essential to his happiness. There is no period in life when this love for society ceases to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the composition and constitution of man, the diversity of his wants, and the diversity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propensity to society, and consequently to preserve the advantages resulting from it, we shall easily discover, that a great part of what is called government is mere imposition.

Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to shew that every thing which government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and to a longer period in several of the American States, there were no established forms of government. The old governments had been abolished, and the country was too much occupied in defence, to employ its attention in establishing new governments; yet during this interval, order and harmony were preserved as inviolate

as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptness in man, and more so in society, because it embraces a greater variety of abilities and resource, to accommodate itself to whatever situation it is in. The instant formal government is abolished, society begins to act. A general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the dissolution of society, that it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their government. In short, man is so naturally a creature of society, that it is almost impossible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a small part of civilized life; and when even the best that human wisdom can devise is established, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of society and civilization—to the common usage universally consented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained—to the unceasing circulation of interest, which, passing through its million channels, invigorates the whole mass of civilized man—it is to these things,

infinitely more than to any thing which even the best instituted government can perform, that the safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself; but so contrary is the practice of old governments to the reason of the case, that the expences of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense men into society, and what the motives that regulate their mutual intercourse afterwards, we shall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of the business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with respect to all those matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware, or that governments would wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals, or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interest. They are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties so to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose.

But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or de-

stroyed by the operations of government! When the latter, instead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favour and oppression, it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we shall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a government, but that government was itself the generating cause; instead of consolidating society, it divided it; it deprived it of its natural cohesion, and engendered discontents and disorders, which otherwise would not have existed. In those associations which men promiscuously form for the purpose of trade, or of any concern, in which government is totally out of the question, and in which they act merely on the principles of society, we see how naturally the various parties unite; and this shews, by comparison, that governments, so far from being always the cause or means of order, are often the destruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other source than the remains of those prejudices, which the government itself had encouraged. But with respect to England there are also other causes.

Excess and inequality of taxation, however disguised in the means, never fail to appear in their effects. As a great mass of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and discontent, they are constantly on the brink of commotion; and, deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are easily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cause of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happiness. It shews that something is wrong in the system of government, that injures the felicity by which society is to be preserved.

But as fact is superior to reasoning, the instance of America presents itself to confirm these observations.—If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations*, accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial union. There, the poor are

* That part of America which is generally called New-England, including New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by English descendants. In the state of New-York, about half are Dutch, the rest English, Scotch, and Irish. In New-Jersey, a mixture of English and Dutch, with some Scotch and Irish. In Pennsylvania, about one-third are English, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Irish, with some Swedes. The States to the southward have a greater proportion of English than the middle States, but in all of them there is a mixture; and besides those enumerated, there are a considerable number of French, and some few of all the European nations lying on the coast. The most numerous religious denomination are the Presbyterians; but no one sect is established above another, and all men are equally citizens.

not oppressed, the rich are not privileged. Industry is not mortified by the splendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expence. Their taxes are few, because their government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

A metaphysical man like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to discover how such a people could be governed. He would have supposed that some must be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by some contrivance; that genius must be hired to impose upon ignorance, and shew and parade to fascinate the vulgar. Lost in the abundance of his researches, he would have resolved and re-resolved, and finally over-looked the plain and easy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American revolution has been, that it led to a discovery of the principles, and laid open the imposition

of governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the class of courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preserved the fraud of the profession.

In all cases they took care to represent government as a thing made up of mysteries, which only themselves understood: and they hid from the understanding of the nation, the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *That government is nothing more than a national association acting on the principles of society.*

HAVING thus endeavoured to shew, that the social and civilized state of man is capable of performing within itself, almost every thing necessary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the present old governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correspondent thereto.

C H A P. II.

Of the Origin of the present Old Governments.

IT is impossible that such governments as have hitherto existed in the world, could have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle sacred and moral. The obscurity in which the origin of all the present old governments is buried, implies the iniquity and disgrace with which they began. The origin of the pre-

sent government of America and France will ever be remembered, because it is honourable to record it; but with respect to the rest, even Flattery has consigned them to the tomb of time, without an inscription.

It could have been no difficult thing in the early and solitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of

men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country, and lay it under contributions. Their power being thus established, the chief of the band contrived to lose the name of Robber in that of Monarch; and hence the origin of Monarchy and Kings.

The origin of the government of England, so far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the latest, is perhaps the best recorded. The hatred which the Norman invasion and tyranny begat, must have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have out-lived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the corseu-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Those bands of robbers having parcelled out the world, and divided into dominions, began, as is naturally the case, to quarrel with each other. What at first was obtained by violence, was considered by others as lawful to be taken, and a second plunderer succeeded the first. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had assigned to himself, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror considered the conquered not as his prisoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him, at pleasure to slavery or death. As time obliterated the history of their beginning, their successors assumed new appearances, to cut off the entail of their disgrace, but their principles and objects remained the same. What at first was plunder, assumed the softer

name of revenue; and the power originally usurped, they affected to inherit.

From such beginning of governments, what could be expected, but a continual system of war and extortion? It has established itself into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exist within such governments a stamina whereon to ingraft reformation; and the shortest and most effectual remedy is to begin anew.

What scenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, present themselves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the history of such governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart, and hypocrisy of countenance, that reflection would shudder at and humanity disown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that must sit for the portrait. Man, naturally as he is, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we possibly suppose that if governments had originated in a right principle, and had not an interest in pursuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelsome condition we have seen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country? Or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any class of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's estate, or raise its value? Are not conquest and defeat each of the same price, and taxes the never-failing consequence?—Though this reasoning may be good to a nation, it is not

so to a government. War is the Pharo table of governments, and nations the dupes of the game.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miserable scene of governments, more than might be expected, it is the progress which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce have made, beneath such a

long accumulating load of discouragement and oppression. It serves to shew, that instinct in animals does not act with stronger impulse, than the principles of society and civilization operate in man. Under all discouragements, he pursues his object, and yields to nothing but impossibilities.

C H A P. III.

Of the Old and New Systems of Government.

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which society, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old system, is an assumption of power, for the aggrandisement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power, for the common benefit of society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promotes a system of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes universal society, as the means of universal commerce. The one measures its prosperity, by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence, by the small quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt his pleasure. It is not to him, but to the Abbé Sieyès, that I address this chapter.

I am already engaged to the latter gentleman, to discuss the subject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new systems, I make this the opportunity of presenting to him my observations. I shall occasionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the system of government now called the NEW, is the most ancient in principle of all that have existed, being founded on the original inherent Rights of Man: yet, as tyranny and the sword have suspended the exercise of those rights for many centuries past, it serves better the purpose of distinction to call it the *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The first general distinction between those two systems, is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *representative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

First, as being an imposition on mankind.

Secondly, As inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary.

With respect to the first of these heads—It cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin: neither does there exist within the compass of mortal power, a right to establish it. Man has no authority over posterity in matters of personal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to set up hereditary government. Were even ourselves to come again into existence, instead of being succeeded by posterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourselves the rights which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With respect to the second head, that of being inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary, we have only to consider what government essentially is, and compare it with the circumstances to which hereditary succession is subject.

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity. It ought to be so constructed as to be superior to all the accidents to which individual man is subject; and therefore, hereditary succession, by being *subject to them all*, is the most irregular and imperfect of all the systems of government.

We have heard the *Rights of Man* called a *levelling* system; but the only system to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical system. It is a system of *mental levelling*. It indiscriminately admits every species of character to the same authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, in short, every quality, good or bad, is put on the same level. Kings succeed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. It signifies not what their mental or moral characters are. Can we then be surprised at the abject state of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itself is formed on such an abject levelling system?—It has no fixed character. To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow it is something else. It changes with the temper of every succeeding individual, and is subject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of passions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurse, in leading-strings, or in crutches. It reverses the wholesome order of nature. It occasionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wisdom and experience. In short, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of government, than hereditary succession, in all its cases, presents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict registered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wisdom should invariably appertain to hereditary succession, the objections to it would be removed; but when we see that nature acts as if she

disowned and sported with the hereditary system; that the mental characters of successors, in all countries, are below the average of human understanding; that one is a tyrant, another an idiot, a third insane, and some all three together, it is impossible to attach confidence to it, when reason in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbé Sieyès that I need apply this reasoning; he has already saved me that trouble, by giving his own opinion upon the case. "If it be asked," says he, "what is my opinion with respect to hereditary right, I answer, without hesitation, That, in good theory, an hereditary transmission of any power or office, can never accord with the laws of a true representation. Hereditaryship is, in this sense, as much an attaint upon principle, as an outrage upon society. But let us," continues he, "refer to the history of all elective monarchies and principalities: Is there one in which the elective mode is not worse than the hereditary succession?"

As to debating on which is the worst of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the Abbé has given, is a condemnation of the thing that he prefers. Such a mode of reasoning on such a subject is inadmissible, because it finally amounts to an accusation upon Providence, as if she had left to man no other choice with respect to government than between two evils, the best of which he admits to be, "*an attaint upon principle, and an outrage upon society.*"

Passing over, for the present, all the evils and mischiefs which monarchy has occasioned in the world, no-

thing can more effectually prove its uselessness in a state of *civil government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wisdom and abilities to fill it? and where wisdom and abilities are not necessary, such an office, whatever it may be, is superfluous or insignificant.

Hereditary succession is a burlesque upon monarchy. It puts it in the most ridiculous light, by presenting it as an office which any child or idiot may fill. It requires some talents, to be a common mechanic; but, to be a king, requires only the animal figure of man—a sort of breathing automaton. This sort of superstition may last a few years more, but it cannot long resist the awakened reason and interest of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a stickler for monarchy, not altogether as a pensioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the same of him. He considers them as a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud, effigy, and shew; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the justice to say, that, with respect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at least in my hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than those of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the imposition of shew was not necessary in their governments.

Though the comparison between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the Abbé had made, is unnecessary to the case, because the re-

presentative system rejects both; yet, were I to make the comparison, I should decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from contested hereditary claims, are more numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than those which have been occasioned by election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchy at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the Houses of York and Lancaster, lasted a whole century; and others of a similar nature, have renewed themselves since that period. Those of 1715 and 1745, were of the same kind. The succession war for the crown of Spain, embroiled almost half Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryship of the Stadtholder. A government calling itself free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the flesh, that produces a fermentation which endeavours to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy, that a permanent family interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of government, let us compare it with the new, or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis; nature, reason, and experience, for its guide.

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries has demonstrated, that it is impossible to controul Nature in her distribution of mental powers. She gives them as she pleases. Whatever is the rule by which she, apparently to us, scatters them among mankind, that rule remains a secret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryship of human beauty, as of wisdom. Whatever wisdom constituently is, it is like a feedless plant; it may be reared when it appears, but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a sufficiency somewhere in the general mass of society for all purposes; but with respect to the parts of society, it is continually changing its place. It rises in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has most probably visited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government must necessarily follow it, or government will, as we see it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary system, therefore, is as repugnant to human wisdom, as to human rights; and is as absurd, as it is unjust.

As the republic of letters brings forward the best literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and universal chance; so the representative system of government is calculated to produce the wisest laws, by collecting wisdom from where it can be found. I smile to myself when I contemplate the ridiculous insignificance into which literature and all the sciences would sink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the same idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconsistent as an hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had sons: but I will ven-

ture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfinished, those sons could not have completed them.

Do we need a stronger evidence of the absurdity of hereditary government, than is seen in descendants of those men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there scarcely an instance in which there is not a total reverse of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forsook its course, and arose in others. How irrational then is the hereditary system which establishes channels of power, in company with which wisdom refuses to flow! By continuing this absurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himself; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magistrate, or a legislator, a person whom he would not elect for a constable.

It appears to general observation, that revolutions create genius and talents; but those events do no more than bring them forward. There is existing in man, a mass of sense lying in a dormant state, and which, unless something excites it to action, will descend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of society that the whole of its faculties should be employed, the construction of government ought to be such as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the insipid state of hereditary government, not only because it prevents, but because it operates to benumb. When

the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political superstition in its government, such as hereditary succession is, it loses a considerable portion of its powers on all other subjects and objects. Hereditary succession requires the same obedience to ignorance, as to wisdom; and when once the mind can bring itself to pay this indiscriminate reverence, it descends below the stature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itself, and suffocates the sensations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments present to us a miserable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itself from the general description. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We see more to admire, and less to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which history affords.

Mr. Burke is so little acquainted with constituent principles of government, that he confounds democracy and representation together. Representation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In those the mass of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically speaking) in the first person. Simple democracy was no other than the common hall of the ancients. It signifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the government. As these democracies increased in population, and the territory extended, the simple democratical form became unwieldy and impracticable; and as the system of representation was not known, the consequence was, they either degenerated convulsively into

monarchies, or became absorbed into such as then existed. Had the system of representation been then understood, as it now is, there is no reason to believe that those forms of government, now called monarchical or aristocratical, would ever have taken place. It was the want of some method to consolidate the parts of society, after it became too populous, and too extensive for the simple democratical form, and also the lax and solitary condition of shepherds and herdsmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to those unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is necessary to clear away the rubbish of errors, into which the subject of government has been thrown, I shall proceed to remark on some others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court governments, to abuse something which they called republicanism; but what republicanism was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this case.

The only forms of government are, the democratical, the aristocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the representative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any particular form of government. It is wholly characteristic of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be instituted, and on which it is to be employed, RES-PUBLICA, the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally translated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and business of government; and in this sense it is naturally opposed to the

word *monarchy*, which has a base original signification. It means arbitrary power in an individual person; in the exercise of which, *himself*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a *Republic*, or in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and sole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government established and conducted for the interest of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not necessarily connected with any particular form, but it most naturally associates with the representative form, as being best calculated to secure the end for which a nation is at the expence of supporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to style themselves a republic. Poland calls itself a republic, which is an hereditary aristocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itself a republic, which is chiefly aristocratical, with an hereditary stadtholdership. But the government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only real republic in character and in practice, that now exists. Its government has no other object than the public business of the nation, and therefore it is properly a republic; and the Americans have taken care that THIS, and no other, shall always be the object of their government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and establishing government on the system of representation only.

Those who have said that a republic is not a *form* of government cal-

culated for countries of great extent, mistook, in the first place, the *business* of a government, for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the second place, if they meant any thing with respect to *form*, it was the simple democratical form such as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no representation. The case, therefore, is not, that a republic cannot be extensive, but that it cannot be extensive on the simple democratical form; and the question naturally presents itself, *What is the best form of government for conducting the RES-PUBLICA or the PUBLIC BUSINESS of a nation, after it becomes too extensive and populous for the simple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, because monarchy is subject to an objection of the same amount to which the simple democratical form was subject.

It is possible that an individual may lay down a system of principles, on which government shall be constitutionally established to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind, acting by its own powers. But the practice upon those principles, as applying to the various and numerous circumstances of a nation, its agriculture, manufacture, trade, commerce, &c. &c. require a knowledge of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of society. It is an assemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can possess; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited,

in useful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extension, into confusion; the other, into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a substitute for the democratical, because it has equal inconveniences.

Much less could it when made hereditary. This is the most effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itself to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motley insignificance of character, which attends such a mere animal-system, the disgrace and the reproach of reason and of man.

As to the aristocratical form, it has the same vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilities is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is still no security for the right use and application of them*.

Referring, then, to the original simple democracy, it affords the true data from which government on a large scale can begin. It is incapable of extension, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and aristocracy, from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt systems of monarchy and aristocracy, the representative system naturally presents itself; remedying at once the defects of the simple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the

* For a character of aristocracy, the reader is referred to *Rights of Man*, Part II.

other two with respect to knowledge.

Simple democracy was society governing itself without the aid of secondary means. By ingrafting representation upon democracy, we arrive at a system of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various interests and every extent of territory and population; and that also with advantages as much superior to hereditary government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this system that the American government is founded. It is representation ingrafted upon democracy. It has fixed the form by a scale parallel in all cases to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world; the other is becoming the admiration and model of the present. It is the easiest of all the forms of government to be understood, and the most eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and insecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the simple democracy.

It is impossible to conceive a system of government capable of acting over such an extent of territory, and such a circle of interests, as is immediately produced by the operation of representation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a spot in the capaciousness of the system. It adapts itself to all possible cases. It is preferable to simple democracy even in small territories. Athens, by representation, would have out-rivalled her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to

conceive government to be, is no more than some common center, in which all the parts of society unite. This cannot be established by any method so conducive to the various interests of the community, as by the representative system. It concentrates the knowledge necessary to the interests of the parts, and of the whole. It places government in a state of constant maturity. It is, as has been already observed, never young, never old. It is subject neither to nonage, nor dotage. It is never in the cradle, nor on crutches. It admits not of a separation between knowledge and power, and is superior, as government always ought to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore superior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common center, in which every radius meets; and that center is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric government. Representation is of itself the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debase itself by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times in his parliamentary speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of government, he says, "It is better to have monarchy for its basis, and republicanism for its corrective, than republicanism for its basis, and monarchy for its corrective."—If he means that it is better to correct folly with wisdom,

than wisdom with folly, I will no otherwise contend with him, than that it would be much better to reject the folly entirely.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it? All men can understand what representation is; and that it must necessarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But what security is there for the same qualities on the part of monarchy? or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wisdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch, or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock species of republic, and the whole of monarchy deserves no better description. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the stable character that government ought to possess. Every succession is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a scene of perpetual court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himself an instance. To render monarchy consistent with government, the next in succession should not be born a child, but a man at once, and that man a Solomon. It is ridiculous that nations are to wait, and government be interrupted, till boys grow to be men.

Whether I have too little sense to see, or too much to be imposed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of any thing else, I leave out of the question; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a silly contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and

fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.

In the representative system of government, nothing of this can happen. Like the nation itself, it possesses a perpetual stamina, as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellencies or its defects, they are visible to all. It exists not by fraud and mystery; it deals not in cant and sophistry; but inspires a language, that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood.

We must shut our eyes against reason, we must basely degrade our understanding, not to see the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works; but this is a mode of government that counteracts nature. It turns the progress of the human faculties upside down. It subjects age to be governed by children, and wisdom by folly.

On the contrary, the representative system is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reason of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the president of the United States, than to any other individual member of congress. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan, (exclusive of the numerous chances there are against

every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in succession, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wisdom? Is it consistent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling such a lad the father of the people?—In all other cases, a person is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period, he is not trusted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of sheep, or an herd of swine; but, wonderful to tell! he may, at the age of eighteen years, be trusted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident, (at least to me), in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be impossible, on the rational system of representative government, to make out a bill of expences to such an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itself a very chargeable institution. The whole expence of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already said, on the system of representation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but six hundred thousand dollars, or one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds sterling.

I presume, that no man in his sober senses will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe, with that of General Washington. Yet, in France, and also in England, the expence of the civil list only, for the support of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expence of the

federal government in America. To assign a reason for this, appears almost impossible. The generality of people in America, especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes, than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the case is, that the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout a nation, on the subject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude imposition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for mystery; no where for it to begin. Those who are not in the representation, know as much of the nature of business as those who are. An affectation of mysterious importance would there be scouted. Nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects.

In the representative system, the reason for every thing must publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government, and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest, because it affects his property. He examines the cost, and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other governments are called LEADERS.

It can only be by blinding the understanding of man, and making him believe that government is some wonderful mysterious thing, that excessive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to ensure this end. It is the popery of government; a thing kept up to amuse the ignorant, and quiet them into taxes.

The government of a free country, properly speaking, is not in the per-

sons, but in the laws. The enacting of those requires no great expence; and when they are administered, the whole of civil government is performed—the rest is all court contrivance.

C H A P. IV.

Of Constitutions.

THAT men mean distinct and separate things when they speak of constitutions and of governments, is evident; or, why are those terms distinctly and separately used? A constitution is not the act of a government, but of a people constituting a government; and government without a constitution, is power without a right.

All power exercised over a nation, must have some beginning. It must be either delegated, or assumed. There are no other sources. All delegated power is trust, and all assumed power is usurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

In viewing this subject, the case and circumstances of America present themselves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of government is shortened, by referring to the facts that have arisen in our own day. We have no occasion to roam for information into the obscure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourselves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of seeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of history, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here concisely state the commencement of the American constitutions; by which the difference between constitutions and governments will sufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America consist of thirteen separate states, each of which established a government for itself, after the declaration of independence, done the fourth of July 1776. Each state acted independently of the rest, in forming its government; but the same general principle pervades the whole. When the several state governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the interest of the whole, or which relate to the intercourse of the several states with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an instance from one of the state governments, (that of Pennsylvania), and then proceed to the federal government.

The state of Pennsylvania, though nearly of the same extent of territory as England, was then divided into only twelve counties. Each of those counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the dispute with the English government; and as

the city of Philadelphia, which also had its committee, was the most central for intelligence, it became the center of communication to the several county committees. When it became necessary to proceed to the formation of a government; the committee of Philadelphia proposed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July 1776.

Though these committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expressly for the purpose, nor invested with the authority of forming a constitution; and as they could not consistently with the American idea of rights, assume such a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore, did no more than state the case, and recommend to the several counties to elect six representatives for each county, to meet in convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a constitution, and propose it for public consideration.

This convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was president, having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a constitution, they next ordered it to be published, not as a thing established, but for the consideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a stated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the convention re-assembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the constitution was signed, sealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the people*, and the original instrument deposited as a public record. The convention then appointed a day for the general election of the representatives who

were to compose the government, and the time it should commence; and having done this, they dissolved, and returned to their several homes and occupations.

In this constitution were laid down, first a declaration of rights. Then followed the form which the government should have, and the powers it should possess—the authority of the courts of judicature, and of juries—the manner in which elections should be conducted, and the proportion of representatives to the number of electors—the time which each succeeding assembly should continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and of accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c. &c. &c.

No article of this constitution could be altered or infringed at the discretion of the government that was to ensue. It was to that government a law. But as it would have been unwise to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order also to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any should be found, and to preserve an union of government with the circumstances of the state at all times, the constitution provided, that, at the expiration of every seven years, a convention should be elected; for the express purpose of revising the constitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any such should be found necessary.

Here we see a regular process—a government issuing out of a constitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that constitution, serving, not only as an authority, but as a law of controul to the government. It was the political bible of the state. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of

the government had a copy; and nothing was more common, when any debate arose on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any species of authority, than for the members to take the printed constitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which such matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an instance from one of the states, I will shew the proceedings by which the federal constitution of the United States arose and was formed.

Congress, at its two first meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legislatures of the several provinces, afterwards states; and had no other authority than what arose from common consent, and the necessity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, congress went no further than to issue recommendation to the several provincial assemblies, who at discretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of congress was compulsive; yet, in this situation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any government in Europe. This instance, like that of the national assembly of France, sufficiently shews, that the strength of government does not consist in any thing *within* itself, but in the attachment of a nation, and the interest which the people feel in supporting it. When this is lost, government is but a child in power; and though, like the old government of France, it may harass individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the declaration of independence, it became consistent with the

principle on which representative government is founded, that the authority of congress should be defined and established. Whether that authority should be more or less than congress then discretionarily exercised, was not the question. It was merely the rectitude of the measure.

For this purpose, the act, called the act of confederation, (which was a sort of imperfect federal constitution), was proposed, and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of congress, because it is repugnant to the principles of representative government that a body should give power to itself, Congress first informed the several states, of the powers which it conceived were necessary to be invested in the union, to enable it to perform the duties and services required from it; and the states severally agreed with each other, and concentrated in congress those powers.

It may not be improper to observe that in both those instances, (the one of Pennsylvania, and the other of the United States), there is no such thing as the idea of a compact between the people on one side, and the government on the other. The compact was that of the people with each other, to produce and constitute a government. To suppose that any government can be a party in a compact with the whole people, is to suppose it to have existence before it can have a right to exist. The only instance in which a compact can take place between the people and those who exercise the government, is, that the people shall pay them, while they chuse to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man or body of men has a right to set up and exercise for his own emolument, but is altogether a trust, in right of those by whom that trust is delegated, and by whom it is always resumable. It has of itself no rights; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two instances of the original formation of a constitution, I will shew the manner in which both have been changed since their first establishment.

The powers vested in the governments of the several states, by the state constitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great; and those vested in the federal government, by the act of confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the distribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newspapers, appeared on the propriety and necessity of new modelling the federal government. After some time of public discussion, carried on thro' the channel of the press, and in conversations, the state of Virginia, experiencing some inconvenience with respect to commerce, proposed holding a continental conference; in consequence of which, a deputation from five or six of the state assemblies met at Annapolis in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itself sufficiently authorised to go into the business of a reform, did no more than state their general opinions of the propriety of the measure, and recommend that a convention of all the states should be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia in May 1787, of which General Washington was elected president. He was not at that time connected with any of the state governments, or with congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the subjects; and having, after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal constitution, the next question was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.

They first directed, that the proposed constitution should be published. Secondly, that each state should elect a convention, expressly for the purpose of taking it into a consideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it: and that as soon as the approbation and ratification of any nine states should be given, that those states should proceed to the election of their proportion of members to the new federal government; and that the operation of it should then begin, and the former federal government cease.

The several states proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions, some of those conventions ratified the constitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimously. In others there were much debate and division of opinion. In the

Massachusetts convention, which met at Boston, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but such is the nature of representative government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Massachusetts convention was closed, and the vote taken, the objecting members rose, and declared, "*That though they had argued and voted against it, because certain parts appeared to them in a different light to what they appeared to other members; yet, as the vote had decided in favour of the constitution as proposed, they should give it the same practical support as if they had voted for it.*"

As soon as nine states had concurred, (and the rest followed in the order their conventions were elected), the old fabric of the federal government was taken down, and a new one elected, of which General Washington is president.—In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and services of this gentleman are sufficient to put all those men called kings to shame. While they are receiving from the sweat and labours of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities nor their services can entitle them, he is rendering every service in his power, and refusing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as commander in chief; he accepts none as president of the United States.

After the new federal constitution was established, the state of Pennsylvania, conceiving that some parts of its own constitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpose. The proposed al-

terations were published, and the people concurring therein, they were established.

In forming those constitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary course of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the interest of a far greater number of people in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unless it decides too hastily.

In the two instances of changing the constitutions, the government then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itself a party in any debate respecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing, constitutions. It is not for the benefit of those who exercise the powers of government, that constitutions, and the governments issuing from them, are established. In all those matters, the right of judging and acting are in those who pay, and not in those who receive.

A constitution is the property of a nation, and not of those who exercise the government. All the constitutions of America are declared to be established on the authority of the people. In France, the word nation is used instead of the people; but in both cases, a constitution is a thing antecedent to the government, and always distinct therefrom.

In England, it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a constitution, except the nation. Every society and association that is esta-

blished, first agreed upon a number of original articles, digested into form, which are its constitution. It then appointed its officers, whose powers and authorities are described in that constitution, and the government of that society then commenced. Those officers, by whatever name they are called, have no authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the constituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of understanding the difference between a constitution and a government, Dr. Johnson, and all writers of his description, have always bewildered themselves. They could not but perceive, that there must necessarily be a *controuling* power existing somewhere, and they placed this power in the discretion of the persons exercising the government, instead of placing it in a constitution formed by the nation. When it is in a constitution, it has the nation for its support, and the natural and the political controuling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by governments, controul men only as individuals, but the nation, through its constitution, controuls the whole government, and has a natural ability so to do. The final controuling power, therefore, and the original constituting power, are one and the same power.

Dr. Johnson could not have advanced such a position in any country where there was a constitution; and he is himself an evidence, that no such thing as a constitution exists in England.—But it may be put as a question, not improper to be investigated, That if a constitution does

not exist, how came the idea of its existence so generally established?

In order to decide this question, it is necessary to consider a constitution in both its cases:—First, as creating a government and giving it powers. Secondly, as regulating and restraining the powers so given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invasion and conquest of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear, that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it less intolerable, has been credited for a constitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called, (it is now like an almanack of the same date,) was no more than compelling the government to renounce a part of its assumptions. It did not create and give powers to government in the manner a constitution does; but was, as far as it went, of the nature of a re-conquest, and not of a constitution; for could the nation have totally expelled the usurpation, as France had done its despotism, it would then have had a constitution to form.

The history of the Edwards and the Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had restricted it. The Stuarts endeavoured to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all those instances we see nothing of a constitution, but only of restrictions on assumed power.

After this, another William, descended from the same stock, and

claiming from the same origin, gained possession; and of the two evils, *James* and *William*, the nation preferred what it thought the least; since, from circumstances, it must take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it, but a bargain, which the parts of the government made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges? You shall have so much, and I will have the rest; and with respect to the nation, it said, for *your share*, *YOU shall have the right of petitioning*. This being the case, the bill of rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and of insult. As to what is called the convention parliament, it was a thing that made itself, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few persons got together, and called themselves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for the purpose.

From the time of William, a species of government arose, issuing out of this coalition bill of rights; and more so, since the corruption introduced at the Hanover succession, by the agency of Walpole: that can be described by no other name than a despotic legislation. Though the parts may embarrass each other, the whole has no bounds; and the only right it acknowledges out of itself, is the right of petitioning. Where then is the constitution either that gives or that restrains power?

It is not because a part of the government is elective, that makes it less a despotism, if the persons so elected, possess afterwards, as a parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this case, becomes separated from representation, and the candidates are candidates for despotism.

I cannot believe that any nation, reasoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling those things *a constitution*, if the cry of constitution had not been set up by the government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore* and *quiz*, by being chalked up in the speeches of parliament, as those words were on window shutters and door posts; but whatever the constitution may be in other respects, it has undoubtedly been *the most productive machine of taxation that was ever invented*. The taxes in France, under the new constitution, are not quite thirteen shillings per head*, and the taxes in England under what is called its present constitution, are forty eight shillings and sixpence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly seventeen millions sterling, besides the expence of collection, which is upwards of a million more.

In a country like England, where the whole of the civil government is executed by the people of every town and county, by means of parish officers, magistrates, quarterly sessions, juries, and assize; without any trouble to what is called the government,

* The whole amount of the assessed taxes of France, for the present year, is three hundred millions of livres, which is twelve millions and a half sterling; and the incidental taxes are estimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and a half; which among twenty-four millions of people, is not quite thirteen shillings per head. France has lessened her taxes since the revolution, nearly nine millions sterling annually. Before the revolution, the city of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the first of last May, and the gates taken down.

or any other expence to the revenue than the salary of the judges, it is astonishing how such a mass of taxes can be employed. Nor even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occasions, whether real or contrived, recourse is continually had to new loans and new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of government so advantageous to the advocates of a court, should be so triumphantly extolled! No wonder, that St. James's or St. Stephen's should echo with the continual cry of constitution! No wonder, that the French revolution should be reprobated, and the *res-publica* treated with reproach! The *red book* of England, like the red book of France, will explain the reason*.

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I ask his pardon for neglecting him so long.

"America," says he, (in his speech on the Canada constitution bill) "never dreamed of such absurd doctrine as the *Rights of Man*."

Mr. Burke is such a bold presumer, and advances his assertions and his premises with such a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourselves about principles of philosophy or politics, the mere logical conclusions they produce, are ridiculous. For instance,

If governments, as Mr. Burke asserts, are not founded on the Rights of MAN, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they consequently must be founded on the rights of *something*

that is *not man*. What then is that something?

Generally speaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than man and beast; and in all cases, where only two things offer themselves, and one must be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving against the rights of *Man*, proves in behalf of the *beast*; and consequently, proves that government is a beast: and as difficult things sometimes explain each other, we now see the origin of keeping wild beasts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other use than to shew the origin of the government. They are in the place of a constitution. O John Bull, what honours thou hast lost by not being a wild beast. Thou mightest, on Mr. Burke's system, have been in the Tower for life.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one serious, the fault is less mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will also make his for giving the cause.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the subject.

From the want of a constitution in England to restrain and regulate the wild impulse of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the administration of them vague and problematical.

* What was called the *livre rouge*, or the red book, in France, was not exactly similar to the court calendar in England; but it sufficiently shewed how a great part of the taxes was lavished.

The attention of the government of England, (for I rather chuse to call it by this name than the English government) appears, since its political connection with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and, with respect to regular law, there is scarcely such a thing.

Almost every case now must be determined by some precedent, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not; and the practice is become so general, as to suggest a suspicion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at first sight appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more so since that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, drawn from times and circumstances antecedent to those events, has been the studied practice of the English government. The generality of those precedents are founded on principles and opinions, the reverse of what they ought; and the greater distance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be suspected. But by associating those precedents with a superstitious reverence for ancient things, as monks shew relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into the design. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a single reflection in man. They are softly leading him to the sepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties, and call his attention from the scene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faster than they wish, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery,

like the ecclesiastical popery of old, has had its, and is hastening to its exit. The ragged relic and the antiquated precedent, the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vilest systems that can be set up. In numerous instances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be shunned instead of imitated: but instead of this, precedents are taken in the lump, and put at once for constitutions and for law.

Either the doctrine of precedents is policy to keep man in a state of ignorance, or it is a practical confession that wisdom degenerates in governments as governments increase in age, and can only hobble along by the stilts and crutches of precedents: How is it that the same persons who would proudly be thought wiser than their predecessors, appear at the same time only as the ghosts of departed wisdom? How strangely is antiquity treated! To answer some purpose it is spoken of as the times of darkness and ignorance; and to answer others, it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents, is to be followed, the expences of government need not continue the same. Why pay men extravagantly who have so little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legislation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every case. Either, therefore, government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occasions for exercising its wisdom have occurred.

We now see all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curious

phænomenon of a nation looking one way, and a government the other—the one forward and the other backward. If governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they must at last come to a final separation; and the sooner, and the more civilly, they determine this point, the better*.

Having thus spoken of constitutions generally as things distinct from actual governments, let us proceed to consider the parts of which a constitution is composed.

Opinions differ more on this subject, than with respect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a constitution, as a rule for the conduct of its government, is a simple question in which all men, not directly courtiers, will agree. It is only on the component parts that questions and opinions multiply.

But this difficulty, like every other, will diminish when put into a train of being rightly understood.

The first thing is, that a nation has a right to establish a constitution.

Whether it exercises this right in the most judicious manner at first, is quite another case. It exercises it agreeably to the judgment it possesses; and by continuing to do so, all errors will at last be exploded.

When this right is established in a nation, there is no fear that it will be

employed to its own injury. A nation can have no interest in being wrong.

Though all the constitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the distribution of the powers which they give to the actual governments. Some are more, and others less complex.

In forming a constitution, it is first necessary to consider what are the ends for which government is necessary? Secondly, what are the best means, and the least expensive, for accomplishing those ends?

Government is nothing more than a national association; and the object of this association is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wishes to pursue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labours and the produce of his property in peace and safety, and with the least possible expence. When these things are accomplished, all the objects for which government ought to be established are answered.

It has been customary to consider government under three distinct general heads. The legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two divisions of power,

* In England, the improvements in agriculture, useful arts, manufactures, and commerce, have been made in opposition to the genius of its government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enterprise and industry of the individuals, and their numerous associations, in which, tritely speaking, government is neither pillow nor bolster, that these improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the government, or who was *in* or who was *out*, when he was planning, or executing those things; and all he had to hope, with respect to government, was, *that it would let him alone*. Three or four very silly ministerial news-papers are continually offending against the spirit of national improvement, by ascribing it to a minister. They may with as much truth ascribe this book to a minister.

of which civil government is composed, namely, that of legislating or enacting laws, and that of executing or administering them. Every thing, therefore, appertaining to civil government, classes itself under one or other of these two divisions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is strictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has appeal, and which causes the laws to be executed; neither have we any other clear idea with respect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and also in America and France, this power begins with the magistrate, and proceeds up through all the courts of judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what is meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of government are done; and any other, or none at all, would answer the same purpose. Laws have neither more or less authority on this account. It must be from the justness of their principles, and the interest which a nation feels therein, that they derive support; if they require any other than this, it is a sign that something in the system of government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With respect to the organization of the *legislative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is gene-

rally composed of two houses. In France it consists but of one; but in both countries it is wholly by representation.

The case is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of assumed power) have had so few opportunities of making the necessary trials on modes and principles of government, in order to discover the best, *that government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections against two houses are, first, That there is an inconsistency in any part of a whole legislature, coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilst *that matter*, with respect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and consequently open to new illustrations.

Secondly, That by taking the vote on each, as a separate body, it always admits of the possibility, and is often the case in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in some instances, to a degree of great inconsistency.

Thirdly, That two houses arbitrarily checking or controuling each other is inconsistent; because it cannot be proved, on the principles of just representation, that either should be wiser or better than the other. They may check in the wrong as well as in the right,—and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wisdom to use it, nor be assured of its being rightly used, renders the hazard at least equal to the precaution*.

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* With respect of the two houses, of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience. But

The objection against a single house is, that it is always in a condition of committing itself too soon.—But it should at the same time be remembered, that when there is a constitution which defines the power, and establishes the principles within which a legislature shall act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example,

Were a bill to be brought into any of the American legislatures, similar to that which was passed into an act by the English parliament, at the commencement of George the First, to extend the duration of the assemblies to a longer period than they now sit, the check is in the constitution, which in effect says *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.*

But in order to remove the objection against a single house, (that of acting with too quick an impulse) and at the same time to avoid the inconsistencies, in some cases absurdities, arising from two

houses, the following method has been proposed as an improvement upon both.

First, To have but one representation.

Secondly, To divide that representation, by lot, into two or three parts.

Thirdly, That every proposed bill shall be first debated in those parts, by succession, that they may become the hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which the whole representation to assemble for a general debate and determination, by vote.

To this proposed improvement has been added another, for the purpose of keeping the representation in a state of constant renovation; which is, that one-third of the representation of each county, shall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number be replaced by new elections.—Another third at the expiration of the second year replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election †.

But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two houses, the difference will appear so great, as to shew the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the house of Lords; and so little is this nick-named house regarded, that the people scarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest of the nation. In the debate on engaging in the Russian and Turkish war, the majority in the house of peers in favour of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other house, which is more than double its members, the majority was sixty-three.

The proceedings on Mr. Fox's bill, respecting the rights of juries, merits also to be noticed. The persons called the peers were not the objects of that bill. They are already in possession of more privileges than that bill gave to others. They are their own jury; and if any of that house were prosecuted for a libel, he would not suffer, even upon conviction, for the first offence. Such inequality in laws ought not to exist in any country. The French constitution says, *That the law is the same to every individual, whether to protect or to punish. All are equal in its sight.*

† As to the state of representation in England, it is too absurd to be reasoned upon. Almost all the represented parts are decreasing in population, and the unrepresented parts are increasing. A general convention of the nation is necessary to take the whole state of its government into consideration.

But in whatever manner the separate parts of a constitution may be arranged, there is *one* general principle that distinguishes freedom from slavery, which is, that all *hereditary government over a people is to them a species of slavery, and representative government is freedom.*

Considering government in the only light in which it should be considered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, it ought to be so constructed as not to be disordered by any accident happening among the parts; and, therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing such an effect, should be lodged in the hands of any individual. The death, sickness, absence, or defection, of any one individual in a government, ought to be a matter of no more consequence, with respect to the nation, than if the same circumstance had taken place in a member of the English Parliament, or the French National Assembly.

Scarcely any thing presents a more degrading character of national greatness, than its being thrown into confusion by any thing happening to, or acted by, an individual; and the ridiculousness of the scene is often increased by the natural insignificance of the person by whom it is occasioned. Were a government

so constructed, that it could not go on unless a goose or a gander were present in the senate, the difficulties would be just as great and as real on the flight or sickness of the goose or the gander, as if it were called a King. We laugh at individuals for the silly difficulties they make to themselves, without perceiving, that the greatest of all ridiculous things are acted in governments*.

All the constitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childish embarrassments which occur in monarchical countries. No suspension of government can there take place for a moment, from any circumstance whatever. The system of representation provides for every thing, and is the only system in which nations and governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, so ought there to be no appropriations of public money to any person, beyond what his services in a state may be worth. It signifies not whether a man be called a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may devise, or arrogance assume; it is only a certain service he can per-

* It is related, that in the canton of Berne, in Switzerland, it had been customary, from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the public expence, and the people had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear, they should all be undone. It happened some years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken sick, and died too suddenly to have his place immediately supplied with another. During this interregnum the people discovered, that the corn grew, and the vintage flourished, and the sun and moon continued to rise and set, and every thing went on the same as before, and, taking courage from these circumstances, they resolved not to keep any more bears; for, said they, "a bear is a very voracious, expensive animal, and we were obliged to pull out his claws, lest he should hurt the citizens."

The story of the bear of Berne was related in some of the French news-papers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be mistaken in France; but it seems, that the aristocracy of Berne applied it to themselves, and have since prohibited the reading of French news-papers.

form in the state ; and the service of any such individual in the routine of office, whether such office be called monarchical, presidential, senatorial, or by another name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thousand pounds a year. All the great services that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept nothing for them ; but the routine of office is always regulated to such a general standard of abilities as to be within the compass of numbers in every country to perform, and therefore cannot merit very extraordinary recompence. *Government, says Swift, is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads.*

It is inhuman to talk of a million sterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the support of any individual, whilst thousands who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and struggling with misery. Government does not consist in a contrast between prisons and palaces, between poverty and pomp ; it is not instituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increase the wretchedness of the wretched.—But of this part of the subject I shall speak hereaf-

ter, and confine myself at present to political observations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a government, he becomes the centre, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and disposing of places, at the expence of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer secure. What is called the splendor of a throne, is no other than the corruption of the state. It is made up of a band of parasites, living in luxurious indolence, out of the public taxes.

When once such a vicious system is established, it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuses. The man who is in the receipt of a million a year is the last person to promote a spirit of reform, lest, in the event, it should reach to himself. It is always his interest to defend inferior abuses, as so many out-works to protect the citadel ; and in this species of political fortification, all the parts have such a common dependence, that it is never to be expected they will attack each other *

* It is scarcely possible to touch on any subject, that will not suggest an allusion to some corruption in governments. The simile of "*fortifications*," unfortunately involves with it a circumstance, which is directly in point with the matter above alluded to

Among the numerous instances of abuse which have been acted or protected by governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quartering a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expence.

Humanity dictates a provision for the poor ; but by what right, moral or political, does any government assume to say, that the person called the Duke of Richmond, shall be maintained by the public ? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchase his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the civil list of the Duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this imposition but a shilling a year, the iniquitous principle would be still the same ; but when it amounts, as it is said to do, to not less than twenty thousand pounds *per ann.* the enormity is too serious to be permitted to remain.—This is one of the effects of monarchy and aristocracy.

Monarchy would not have continued so many ages in the world, had it not been for the abuses it protects. It is the master-fraud, which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which constitutions are now formed rejects all hereditary pretensions to government, it also rejects all that catalogue of assumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any government where prerogatives might with apparent safety be entrusted to any individual, it is in the federal government of America. The President of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only responsible in the general sense of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the constitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he must be a native of the country.

In a comparison of these cases with the government of England, the difference, when applied to the latter, amounts to an absurdity. In England, the person who exercises prerogative is often a foreigner; always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connection with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of age at eighteen years; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances, without

even the knowledge of the nation; and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connections, which, in effect, accomplishes a great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will produce almost the same thing. Under such circumstances, it is happy for England that she is not situated on the continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the government had been the means.

The presidency in America, (or, as it is sometimes called, the executive) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded; and in England it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of Parliament, but he may be what is called a king. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where mischief can be most acted, and where, by uniting every bias of interest and attachment, the trust is best secured.

But as nations proceed in the great business of forming constitutions, they will examine with more precision into the nature and business of that department which is called the executive. What the legislative

In stating this case, I am led by no personal dislike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public, the vice originates in the government, and so general is it become, that whether the parties are in the ministry or in the opposition it makes no difference; they are sure of the guarantee of each other.

and judicial departments are, every one can see; but with respect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as distinct from those two, it is either a political superfluity or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department, to which reports shall be made from the different parts of a nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national representatives, is all that is necessary; but there is no consistency in calling this the executive; neither can it be considered in any other light than as inferior to the legislative. The sovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing else is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the several parts of a constitution, is the provision to be made for the support of the persons to whom the nation shall confide the administration of the constitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and services of any person at his own expence, whom it may chuse to employ or entrust in any department whatever; neither can any reason be given for making provision for the support of any one part of a government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honour of being entrusted with any part of a government, is to be considered a sufficient reward, it ought to be so to every person alike. If the members of the legislature of any country are to serve at their own expence, that which is called the executive, whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to serve in like manner. It is inconsistent to pay the one,

and accept the service of the other gratis.

In America, every department in the government, is decently provided for; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of Congress, and of the assemblies, is allowed a sufficiency for his expences. Whereas in England, a most prodigal provision is made for the support of one part of the government, and none for the other; the consequence of which is, that the one is furnished with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Less than a fourth part of such expence, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American constitutions, is the exploding all oaths of personality. The oath of allegiance in America is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happiness of a nation is the superior object, and therefore the intention of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obscured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any person. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, viz. the "*nation, the law, and the king*," is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only. The law may or may not be good; but, in this place, it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happiness of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground, that all personal oaths ought to be abolished. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and slavery on the other; and the name

of the CREATOR ought not to be introduced to witness the degradation of his creation; or if taken, as is already mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the first establishment of a government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a government requires the support of oaths, it is a sign that it is not worth supporting, and ought not to be supported. Make government what it ought to be, and it will support itself.

To conclude this part of the subject:—One of the greatest improvements that has been made for the perpetual security and progress of constitutional liberty, is the provision which the new constitutions make for occasionally revising, altering, and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his political creed, that of *binding and controuling posterity to the end of time, and renouncing and abdicating the rights of all posterity for ever*, is now become too detestable to be made a subject of debate; and, therefore, I pass it over with no other notice than exposing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exercise of power, which forbid all effectual enquiry into rights, and grounded itself wholly on possession. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progress of its principles must have been small indeed.

The constitutions of America, and also that of France, have either affixed a period for their revision, or laid down the mode by which improvements shall be made. It is perhaps impossible to establish any thing

that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progress of circumstances, through a length of years, will not in some measure derange, or render inconsistent; and, therefore, to prevent inconveniencies accumulating, till they discourage reformatiions or provoke revolutions, it is best to provide the means of regulating them as they occur. The Rights of Man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, will be followed for the sake of its worth; and it is in this that its security lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be encumbered. When a man leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they shall accept it. Why then should we do otherwise with respect to constitutions?

The best constitution that could now be devised, consistent with the condition of the present moment, may be far short of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of government, that has not appeared before. As the barbarism of the present old governments expires, the moral condition of nations, with respect to each other, will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the savage idea of considering his species as his enemy, because the accident of birth gave the individuals existence in countries distinguished by different names; and as constitutions have always some relation to external as well as to domestic circumstances, the means of benefitting by every change, foreign or domestic, should be a part of every constitution.

We already see an alteration in the national disposition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back to only a few years, is itself a revolution. Who could have foreseen, or who would have believed, that a French National Assembly would ever have been a popular toast in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations should become the wish of either. It shews, that man, were he not corrupted by governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itself vicious. That spirit of jealousy and ferocity, which the governments of the two countries inspired, and which they rendered subservient to the purpose of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reason, interest, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be understood, and the affectation of

mystery, with all the artificial forcery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, instead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the most ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the excess of debts and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world?

Just emerging from such a barbarous condition, it is too soon to determine to what extent of improvement government may yet be carried. For what we can foresee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

C H A P. V.

Ways and Means of improving the condition of Europe, interspersed with Miscellaneous Observations.

IN contemplating a subject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impossible to confine the pursuit in one single direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and world.

From a small spark kindled in America, a flame has arisen, not to be extinguished. Without consuming, like the *Ultima Ratio Regum*, it winds its progress from nation to nation,

and conquers by a silent operation. Man finds himself changed, he scarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending justly to his interest, and discovers in the event that the strength and powers of despotism consist wholly in the fear of resisting it, and that, in order "to be free, it is sufficient that he wills it."

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavoured to establish a system of principles as a basis on

which governments ought to be erected; I shall proceed in this, to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the subject with more propriety, and stronger effect, some preliminary observations, deducible from, or connected with, those principles, are necessary.

Whatever the form or constitution of government may be, it ought to have no other object than the *general* happiness. When, instead of this, it operates to create and encrease wretchedness in any of the parts of society, it is on a wrong system, and reform action is necessary.

Customary language has classed the condition of man under the two descriptions of civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has ascribed felicity and affluence; to the other, hardship and want. But however, our imagination may be impressed by painting and comparison, it is nevertheless true, that a great portion of mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a state of poverty and wretchedness, far below the condition of an Indian. I speak not of one country, but of all. It is so in England, it is so all over Europe. Let us enquire into the cause.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing those principles having an universal operation; the consequence of which is, a perpetual system of war and expence, that drains the country, and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European governments (France now excepted) are constructed, not on the principle of universal

civilization, but on the reverse of it. So far as those governments relate to each other, they are in the same condition as we conceive of savage uncivilized life; they put themselves beyond the law as well of God as of man, and are, with respect to principle and reciprocal conduct, like so many individuals in a state of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, easily civilize together; but governments being yet in an uncivilized state, and almost continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces, to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus engrafting the barbarism of government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more especially from the poor, a great portion of those earnings, which should be applied to their own subsistence and comfort.—A-part from all reflections of morality and philosophy, it is a melancholy fact, that more than one-fourth of the labour of mankind is annually consumed by this barbarous system.

What has served to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage, which all the governments of Europe have found in keeping up this state of uncivilization. It affords to them pretences for power and revenue, for which there would be neither occasion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered compleat. Civil government alone, or the government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the possibility of much imposition. But when the scene is laid in the uncivi-

lized contention of governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every imposition which governments please to act.

Not a thirtieth, scarcely a fortieth part of the taxes which are raised in England, are either occasioned by, or applied to, the purposes of civil government. It is not difficult to see, that the whole which the actual government does in this respect, is to enact laws, and that the country administers and executes them, at its own expence, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions, and assize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the case, we have two distinct characters of government; the one, the civil government, or the government of laws, which operates at home; the other, the court or cabinet government, which operates abroad on the rude plan of uncivilized life; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundless extravagance; and so distinct are the two, that if the latter were to sink, as it were by a sudden opening of the earth, and totally disappear, the former would not be deranged. It would still proceed, because it is the common interest of the nation that it should, and all the means are in practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of governments, and with this change the burthen of public taxes will lessen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this subject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my

publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, because I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific system, operating to cordialize mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, useful to each other. As to mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The most effectual process is that of improving the condition of man by means of his interest; and it is on this ground that I take my stand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the system of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized state of governments. The invention of commerce has arisen since those governments began, and is the greatest approach towards universal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourse of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a subject as worthy of philosophy as of politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of two individuals, multiplied on a scale of numbers; and by the same rule that nature intended the intercourse of two, she intended that of all. For this purpose she has distributed the materials of manufactures and commerce, in various and distant parts of a nation and of the world; and as they cannot be procured by war so cheaply or so commodiously as by commerce, she has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the opposites of each other, consequently, the uncivilized state of European govern-

ments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of destruction or embarrassment serves to lessen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts, without being taken from the whole mass in circulation, and all partake of the loss. When the ability in any nation to buy is destroyed, it equally involves the seller. Could the government of England destroy the commerce of all other nations, she would most effectually ruin her own.

It is possible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but she cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the seller and the buyer of her own merchandize. The ability to buy must reside out of herself; and, therefore, the prosperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the prosperity of the rest. If they are poor, she cannot be rich; and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its universal operation may be understood, without understanding the practice, is a position that reason will not deny; and it is on this ground only that I argue the subject. It is one thing in the counting-house, in the world it is another. With respect to its operation, it must necessarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing, that only one half its powers resides within the nation, and

that the whole is as effectually destroyed by destroying the half that resides without, as if the destruction had been committed on that which is within, for neither can act without the other.

When in the last, as well as in former wars, the commerce of England sunk, it was because the general quantity was lessened every where; and it now rises, because commerce is in a rising state in every nation. If England, at this day, imports and exports more than at any former period, the nation with which she trades must necessarily do the same; her imports are their exports, and *vice versa*.

There can be no such thing as a nation flourishing alone in commerce; she can only participate; and the destruction of it in any part must necessarily effect all. When, therefore, governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common stock of commerce, and the consequence is the same as if each had attacked his own.

The present increase of commerce is not to be attributed to ministers, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in consequence of peace. The regular markets had been destroyed, the channels of trade broken up, the high road of the seas infested with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Those interruptions have ceased, and peace has restored the deranged condition of things to their proper order*.

* In America, the increase of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at least one half more than at any period prior to the revolution. The greatest number of vessels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year 1788, the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the state of Pennsylvania is estimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of vessels must now be nearly ten thousand.

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of trade in its own favour; and therefore something must be irregular in the common ideas upon this subject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance; and it is from this cause that commerce is universally supported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice: but the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and in attributing what are called profits to a wrong cause.

Mr. Pitt has sometimes amused himself, by shewing what he called a balance of trade from the custom-house books. This mode of calculation, not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is false.

In the first place, Every cargo that departs from the custom-house, appears on the books as an export; and according to the custom-house balance, the losses at sea, and by foreign failures, are all reckoned on the side of profit, because they appear as exports.

Secondly, Because the importation by the smuggling trade does not appear on the custom-house books, to arrange against the exports.

No balance, therefore, as applying to superior advantages, can be drawn from those documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would soon be injurious. The great support of commerce consists in the balance being a level of benefits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favour; consequent-

ly, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the same with respect to the nations in which they reside. The case must be, that each nation must get rich out of its own means, and increases that riches by something which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England sends an article of English manufacture abroad, which costs him a shilling at home, and imports something which sells for two, he makes a balance of one shilling in his own favour: but this is not gained out of the foreign nation or the foreign merchant, for he also does the same by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries were but two shillings; but by changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what they had at first, and that increased value is equally divided.

There is no otherwise a balance on foreign than on domestic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcastle trade on the same principles, as if they resided in different nations, and make their balances in the same manner: yet London does not get rich out of Newcastle, any more than Newcastle out of London: but coals, the merchandize of Newcastle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the same at Newcastle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the same, the domestic, in a national view, is the part the most beneficial; because the whole of the advantages, on both sides, rests within the nation; whereas, in

foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one half.

The most unprofitable of all commerce is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely because it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loss. The expence of maintaining dominion more than absorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increase the general quantity in the world, but operates to lessen it; and as a greater mass would be afloat by relinquishing dominion, the participation without the expence would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impossible to engross commerce by dominion; and therefore it is still more fallacious. It cannot exist in confined channels, and necessarily breaks out by regular or irregular means that defeat the attempt; and to succeed would be still worse. France, since the revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign possessions; and other nations will become the same, when they investigate the subject with respect to commerce.

To the expence of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two are subtracted from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exist, is not enjoyed by the nation, but absorbed by the government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce, is delusive.

It is putting the means of destruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal interest which every nation feels in supporting it—it is common stock—it exists by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the present uncivilized state of governments, and which it is its common interest to reform*.

Quitting this subject, I now proceed to other matters.—As it is necessary to include England in the prospect of a general reformation, it is proper to enquire into the defects of its government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in government could have successfully begun. The one secure by the ocean, and the other by the immensity of its internal strength, could defy the malignancy of foreign despotism. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increase by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

As a new system is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former systems, are agitating, and a common interest of courts is forming against the common interest of man. This

* When I saw Mr. Pitt's mode of estimating the balance of trade, in one of his parliamentary speeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and interest of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himself. During a period of peace, it has been havocked with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into stagnation, and the vessels unmanned by impressing, within less than four years of peace.

combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and presents a cause so entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumstances. While despotism warred with despotism, man had no interest in the contest; but in a cause that unites the foldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the despotism of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge, is afraid to strike.

No question has arisen within the records of history that pressed with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization take place? Whether the fruits of his labour shall be enjoyed by himself, or consumed by the profligacy of governments? Whether robbery shall be banished from courts, and wretchedness from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the workhouse, and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government. It would seem, by the exterior appearance of such countries, that all was happiness; but there lies hidden from the eye of common observation, a mass of wretchedness that has scarcely any other chance, than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the presage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to punish.

Civil government does not consist in executions; but making that provision for the instruction of youth, and the support of age, as to exclude, as much as possible, profligacy from

the one, and despair from the other. Instead of this, the resources of a country are lavished upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impostors and prostitutes; and even the poor themselves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to support the fraud that oppresses them.

Why is it, that scarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedness in their condition. Bred up without morals, and cast upon the world without a prospect, they are the exposed sacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are superfluously wasted upon governments, are more than sufficient to reform those evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included within the purlieus of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progress of this work.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune. In taking up this subject I seek no recompence—I fear no consequence. Fortified with that proud integrity, that disdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the Rights of man.

It is to my advantage that I have served an apprenticeship to life. I know the value of moral instruction, and I have seen the danger of the contrary.

At an early period, little more than sixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a master * who had served in a man of war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible Privateer, Capt. Death. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remon-

* Rev. William Knowles, master of the grammar school of Thetford, in Norfolk.

france of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profession, must begin to look upon me as lost. But the impression, much as it effected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the King of Prussia privateer, Capt. Mendez, and went with her to sea. Yet, from such a beginning, and with all the inconvenience of early life against me, I am proud to say, that with a perseverance undimmed by difficulties, a disinterestedness that compelled respect, I have not only contributed to raise a new

empire in the world, founded on a new system of government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the most difficult of all lines to succeed and excel in, which aristocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myself, as I now do, superior to all the skirmish of party, the inveteracy of interested or mistaken opponents, I answer not to falsehood or abuse, but proceed to the defects of the English government*.

Q

* Politics and self-interest have been so uniformly connected, that the world, from being so often deceived, has a right to be suspicious of public characters: but with regard to myself, I am perfectly easy on this head. I did not at my first setting out in public life, nearly seventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to subjects of government from motives of interest; and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I saw an opportunity, in which I thought I could do some good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor studied other people's opinions. I thought for myself. The case was this:

During the suspension of the old governments in America, both prior to, and at the breaking out of hostilities, I was struck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impressed with the idea, that a little more than what society naturally performed, was all the government that was necessary; and that monarchy and aristocracy were frauds and impositions upon mankind. On these principles I published the pamphlet *Common Sense*. The success it met with was beyond any thing since the invention of printing. I gave the copy right up to every state in the union, and the demand ran to not less than one hundred thousand copies.

After the declaration of independence, Congress unanimously, and unknown to me, appointed me secretary in the foreign department. This was agreeable to me, because it gave me the opportunity of seeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing business. But a misunderstanding arising between congress and me, respecting one of their commissioners, then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I resigned the office, and declined, at the same time, the pecuniary offers made me by the ministers of France and Spain, M. Gerard and Don Juan Miralles.

I had by this time so completely gained the ear and confidence of America, and my own independence was become so visible as to give me a range in political writing, beyond, perhaps, what any man ever possessed in any country; and what is more extraordinary, I held it undiminished to the end of the war, and enjoy it in the same manner to the present moment. As my object was not myself, I set out with the determination, and happily with the disposition, of not being moved by praise or censure, friendship or calumny, nor of being drawn from my purpose by any personal altercation; and the man who cannot do this, is not fit for a publick character.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Borden-Town, on the east bank of the Delaware, where I have a small place. Congress was at this time at Prince-Town, fifteen miles distant; and General Washington had taken his head-quarters at Rocky-Hill, within the neighbourhood of Congress, for the purpose of resigning up his commission, (the object for which he accepted it being accomplished,) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this business, he wrote me the letter which I here subjoin.

Rocky-

I begin with charters and corporations.

It is a perversion of terms to say, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right by exclusion in the hands of a few. If

charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a corporation, shall not exercise the right of voting,*" such charters would, in the face, be charters, not of rights, but of exclusion. The effect is the same under the form they now stand; and the only persons on whom they operate, are the persons

Rocky-Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Borden-Town. Whether for the sake of retirement or œconomy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you at it.

Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one, who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

Your sincere friend,

G. WASHINGTON.

During the war in the latter end of the year 1780, I formed to myself a design of coming over to England; and communicated it to General Greene, who was then in Philadelphia, on his route to the southward, General Washington being then at too great a distance to communicate with immediately. I was strongly impressed with the idea, that if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in safety till I could get out a publication, that I could open the eyes of the country with respect to the madness and stupidity of its government. I saw that the parties in parliament had pushed themselves as far as they could go, and could make no new impressions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views; but the affair of Arnold and Andre happening just after, he changed his mind, and, under strong apprehensions for my safety, wrote very pressingly to me from Annapolis, in Maryland, to give up the design, which, with some reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied Col. Lawrens, son of Mr. Lawrens, who was then in the Tower, to France, on business from Congress. We landed at L'Orient; and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumstance occurred, that renewed my former design. An English packet from Falmouth to New-York, with the government dispatches on board, was brought into L'Orient. That a packet should be taken, is no extraordinary thing; but that the dispatches should be taken with it, will scarcely be credited, as they are always flung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon-ball, and ready to be sunk at a moment. The fact, however, is as I have stated it, for the dispatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, succeeded by the following stratagem:—The captain of the Madame privateer, who spoke English, on coming up with the packet, passed himself for the captain of an English frigate, and invited the captain of the packet on board, which, when done, he sent some of his own hands back, and secured the mail. But be the circumstance of the capture what it may, I speak with certainty as to the government dispatches. They were sent up to Paris, to Count Vergennes, and when Col. Lawrens and myself returned to America, we took the originals to Congress.

By these dispatches I saw into the stupidity of the English cabinet, far more than I otherwise could have done, and I renewed my former design. But Col. Lawrens was so unwilling to return alone; more especially, as among other matters, we had a charge of upwards of two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, that I gave into his wishes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, that it would not have been altogether unsuccessful.

whom they exclude. Those whose rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exercise no other rights, than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favour of A by taking away the right of B, and consequently are instruments of injustice.

But charters and corporations have a more extensive evil effect, than what relates merely to elections. They are sources of endless contention in the places where they exist; and they lessen the common rights of national society. A native of England, under the operation of these charters and corporations, cannot be said to be an Englishman in the full sense of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the same manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumscribed to the town, and, in some cases, to the parish of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land, are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a residence in these, he must undergo a local naturalization by purchase, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This species of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the

corporations at the ruin of towns; and the effect is visible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a state of solitary decay, and prevented from further ruin, only by some circumstance in their situation, such as a navigable river, or a plentiful surrounding country. As population is one of the chief sources of wealth, (for without it land itself has no value,) every thing which operates to prevent it must lessen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, instead of that of general freedom, to every person to settle where he chose, (as in France or America,) it would be more consistent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admission by exacting premiums from them*.

The persons most immediately interested in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are established. The instances of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, shew, by contrast, the injury which those Gothic institutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, such as that of London, whose natural and commercial advantage, owing to its situation

* It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unless we suppose them to have arisen out of, or been connected with, some species of garrison service. The times in which they began to justify this idea. The generality of those towns have been garrisons; and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garrison was present. Their refusing or granting admission to strangers, which has produced the custom of giving, selling, and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garrison authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the same propriety that every soldier is free of every garrison, and no other persons are. He can follow any employment, with the permission of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.

on the Thames, is capable of bearing up against the political evils of a corporation; but in almost all other cases the fatality is too visible to be doubted or denied.

Though the whole nation is not so directly affected by the depression of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themselves, it partakes of the consequence. By lessening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a customer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, must necessarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houses of the English parliament is, in a great measure, made up of elections from these corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure stream should flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honour and good political principles, cannot submit to the mean drudgery and disgraceful arts, by which such elections are carried. To be a successful candidate, he must be destitute of the qualities that constitute a just legislator: and being thus disciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into parliament; it is not to be expected that the representative should be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the English representation, has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of chivalry. "Our representation," says he, "has been found *perfectly adequate to all the purposes* for which a representation of the people can be de-

"fired or devised. I defy," continues he, "the enemies of our constitution to shew the contrary." This declaration from a man, who has been in constant opposition to all the measures of parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is most extraordinary; and comparing him with himself, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted against his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the representation only that the defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to the aristocracy.

What is called the House of Peers, is constituted on a ground very similar to that, against which there is a law in other cases. It amounts to a combination of persons in one common interest. No reason can be given, why an house of legislation should be composed entirely of men whose occupation consists in letting landed property, than why it should be composed of those who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other separate class of men.

Mr. Burke calls this house, "*the great ground and pillar of security to the landed interest.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of security does the landed interest require more than any other interest in the state, or what right has it to a distinct and separate representation from the general interest of a nation? The only use to be made of this power, (and which it has always made,) is to ward off taxes from itself, and throw the burthen upon such articles of consumption by which itself would be least affected.

That this has been the consequence, (and will always be the consequence of constructing governments on combinations,) is evident with respect to England, from the history of its taxes.

Notwithstanding taxes have encreased and multiplied upon every article of common consumption, the land-tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminished. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was £.1,950,000 which is half a million less than it produced almost an hundred years ago*, notwithstanding the rentals are in many instances doubled since that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of consumption, the land bearing rather the largest share: but since that æra, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon consumption. The consequence of which has been a constant encrease in the number and wretchedness of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burthen does not fall in equal proportions on the aristocracy with the rest of the community. Their residences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor. They live apart from distress, and the expence of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and labouring villages that those burthens press the heaviest; in many of which it is one class of poor supporting another.

Several of the most heavy and productive taxes are so contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus standing in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for sale does not affect the aristocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on those who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who must purchase it in small quantities. But what will mankind think of the justice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from which the aristocracy are from circumstances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, and it is not less now, £.1,666,152 and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it.—That a single article, thus partially consumed, and that chiefly by the working part, should be subject to a tax, equal to that on the whole rental of a nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the histories of revenues.

This is one of the consequences resulting from an house of legislation, composed on the ground of a combination of common interest; for whatever their separate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raise the price of any article for sale, or the rate of wages; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itself upon another class of the community, the principle and the effect are the same: and if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to shew that the other ought to exist.

* See Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue. The land-tax in 1646 was £.2,473,499.

It is to no use to say, that taxes are first proposed in the house of commons; for as the other house has always a negative, it can always defend itself; and it would be ridiculous to suppose that its acquiescence in the measures to be proposed were not understood before hand. Besides which, it has obtained so much influence by borough-traffic, and so many of its relations and connections are distributed on both sides of the commons, as to give it, besides an absolute negative in one house, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to discover what is meant by the *landed interest*, if it does not mean a combination of aristocratical land-holders, opposing their own pecuniary interest to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other respects it is the only interest that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is interested in the fruits of the earth; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to assist the farmer, rather than a harvest should not be got in; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the interest, not of the policy, but of the existence of man, and when it ceases he must cease to be.

No other interest in a nation stands on the same united support. Commerce, manufactures, arts, sciences, and every thing else, compared with

this, are supported but in parts. Their prosperity or their decay has not the same universal influence. When the vallies laugh and sing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoices. It is a prosperity that excludes all envy; and this cannot be said of any thing else.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of his house of peers, as the pillar of the landed interest? Were that pillar to sink into the earth, the same landed property would continue, and the same ploughing, sowing, and reaping would go on. The aristocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raise the produce, but are the mere consumers of the rent; and when compared with the active world, are the drones, a seraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exist only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his first essay, called aristocracy, "*the Corinthian capital of polished society.*" Towards compleating the figure, he has now added the *pillar*; but still the base is wanting; and whenever a nation chuses to act a Sampson, not blind, but bold, down go the temple of Dagon, the Lords and the Philistines.

If a house of legislation is to be composed of men of one class, for the purpose of protecting a distinct interest, all the other interests should have the same. The inequality, as well as the burthen of taxation, arises from admitting it in one case, and not in all. Had there been an house of farmers, there had been no game laws; or an house of merchants and manufacturers, the taxes had neither been so unequal nor so

excessive. It is from the power of taxation being in the hands of those who can throw so great a part of it from their own shoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of small or moderate estates, are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of consumption, than they are eased by warding it from landed property, for the following reasons:

First, They consume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property, than those of large estates.

Secondly, Their residence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houses; and the encrease of the poor rates, occasioned by taxes on consumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favoured. In Birmingham, the poor-rates are not less than seven shillings in the pound. From this, as is already observed, the aristocracy are in a great measure exempt.

These are but a part of the mischiefs flowing from the wretched scheme of an house of peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a considerable portion of taxes from itself; and as an hereditary house, accountable to nobody, it resembles a rotten borough, whose consent is to be courted by interest. There are but few of its members, who are not in some mode or other participaters, or disposers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting; another a lord of the bed-chamber, a groom of the stole, or any insignificant nominal office, to which a salary is annexed, paid out of the public taxes, and which avoids the direct appearance of corruption. Such situations

are derogatory to the character of man; and where they can be submitted to, honour cannot reside.

To all these are to be added the numerous dependants, the long list of younger branches and distant relations, who are to be provided for at the public expence: in short, were an estimation to be made of the charge of aristocracy to a nation, it will be found nearly equal to that of supporting the poor. The Duke of Richmond alone (and there are cases similar to his) takes away as much for himself as would maintain two thousand poor and aged persons. Is it, then, any wonder, that under such a system of government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their present extent?

In stating these matters, I speak an open and disinterested language, dictated by no passion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refused offers, because I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanness and imposition appear disgusting. Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or person; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the aristocratical law of primogeniture, says, "it is the standing law of our landed inheritance; and which, without question, has a tendency, and I think," continues, he, "a happy tendency, to preserve a character of weight and consequence."

Mr. Burke, may call this law what he pleases, but humanity and impartial reflection will denounce it a law of brutal injustice. Were we not accustomed to the daily practice, and

did we only hear of it as the law of some distant part of the world, we should conclude that the legislators of such countries had not yet arrived at a state of civilization.

As to its preserving a character of *weight and consequence*, the case appears to me directly the reverse. It is an attain upon character; a sort of privateering on family property. It may have weight among dependant tenants, but it gives none on a scale of national, and, much less of universal character. Speaking for myself, my parents were not able to give me a shilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves; yet, I possess more of what is called consequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of aristocrats.

Having thus glanced at some of the defects of the two houses of parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown, upon which I shall be very concise.

It signifies a nominal office of a million sterling a year, the business of which consists in receiving the money. Whether the person be wise or foolish, sane or insane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every ministry acts upon the same idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people must be hood-winked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other; and what is called the crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers all the purposes to be expected from it. This is more than can be said of the other two branches.

The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to

the nation, the danger of its coming to its senses.

It has been customary to call the crown the executive power, and the custom is continued, though the reason has ceased.

It was called the *executive*, because the person whom it signified used formerly, to sit in the character of a judge, in administering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, is what was called the executive; and, consequently, one or other of the terms is redundant, and one of the offices useless. When we speak of the crown now, it means nothing; it signifies neither a judge nor a general; besides which it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, to give an appearance of consequence to empty forms; and the only effect they have is that of increasing expences.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering governments more conducive to the general happiness of mankind, than they are at present, it will not be improper to take a review of the progress of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always so. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over government than those of the present, or government was administered with less extravagance.

It is now seven hundred years since the Norman conquest, and the establishment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in seven separate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the

annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows :—

Annual amount of taxes levied by William the Conqueror, beginning in the year 1066,	£400,000
Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conquest, (1166)	200,000
Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conquest, (1266)	150,000
Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conquest, (1366)	130,000
Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conquest, (1466)	100,000

These statements, and those which follow, are taken from Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue; by which it appears, that taxes continued decreasing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, viz. from four hundred thousand pounds to one hundred thousand. The people of England of the present day, have a traditionary and historical idea of the bravery of their ancestors; but whatever their virtues or their vices might have been, they certainly were a people who would not be imposed upon, and who kept government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able

to expel the monarchical usurpation, they restricted it to a republican economy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from the conquest, (1566)	£.500,000
Annual amount of taxes at six hundred years from the conquest, (1666)	1,800,000
Annual amount of taxes at the present time, (1791)	17,000,000

The difference between the first four hundred years and the last three, is so astonishing, as to warrant an opinion, that the national character of the English has changed. It would have been impossible to have dragooned the former English, into the excess of taxation that now exists; and when it is considered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue-officers, is the same now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at present, it appears impossible to account for the enormous increase and expenditure, on any other ground, than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue*.

* Several of the court newspapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory should be traduced by court sycophants, and all those who live on the spoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injustice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valour. The history is concisely this :—In the time of Richard the second, a poll-tax was levied, of one shilling per head, upon every person in the nation, of whatever estate or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favour was shewn in the law, it was to the rich rather than to the poor; as no person could be charged more than twenty shillings for himself, family, and servants, though ever so numerous; while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious; but this being also oppressive

With the revolution of 1688, and more so since the Hanover succession, came the destructive system of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion; systems of such secure mystery that the expences admit of no accounts; a single line stands for millions. To what excess taxation might have extended, had not the French revolution contributed to break up the system, and put an end to pretences, is impossible to say. Viewed, as that revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of lessening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as much importance to England as to France; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deserve as much celebration in one country as the other.

In pursuing this subject, I shall begin with the matter that first presents itself, that of lessening the burthen of taxes; and shall then add such

matters and propositions, respecting the three countries of England, France, and America, as the present prospect of things appears to justify; I mean an alliance of the three, for the purposes that will be mentioned in their proper place.

What has happened may happen again. By the statement before shewn of the progress of taxation, it is seen, that taxes have been lessened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the present circumstances do not admit of the same reduction, yet it admits of such a beginning, as may accomplish that end in less time, than in the former case.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmas 1788, was as follows:

Land Tax,	-	£.1,950,000
Customs,	-	3,780,274
Excise, (including old and new malt,)	-	6,751,727
		£.12,491,001

pressive and unjust, it excited, as it naturally must, universal detestation among the poor and middle classes. The person known by the name of Wat Tyler, whose proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade, lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his house, demanded tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer insisted on satisfying himself, and began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he struck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cause of his death.

This circumstance served to bring the discontents to an issue. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood espoused the cause of Tyler, who, in a few days was joined, according to some histories, by upwards of fifty thousand men, and chosen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redress of other grievances. The court, finding itself in a forlorn condition, and unable to make resistance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair professions, courtier like, of its dispositions to redress the oppressions. While Richard and Tyler were in conversation on these matters, each being on horseback, Walworth, then mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and like a cowardly assassin, stabbed Tyler with a dagger; and two or three others falling upon him, he was instantly sacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid disinterested man, with respect to himself. All his proposals made to Richard, were on a more just and public ground, than those which had been made to John by the Barons; and notwithstanding the sycophancy of historians, and men like Mr. Burke, who seek to gloss over a base action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falsehood. If the Barons merited a monument to be erected in Runnymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

Brought over,	-	£.12,491,001
Stamps,	-	1,278,214
Miscellaneous taxes and incidents,	-	1,803,755
		£.15,572,970

Since the year 1788, upwards of one million, new taxes have been laid on, besides the produce from the lotteries; and as the taxes have in general been more productive since than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at

£.17,000,000

N. B. The expence of collection and the draw-backs, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the gross amount; and the above is the nett sum paid into the exchequer.

This sum of seventeen millions is applied to two different purposes; the one to pay the interest of the national debt, the other to the current expences of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, said to be applied to the reduction of the debt, it is so much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that she possessed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby lessening her taxes: but as this is not the case in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expences, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will hereafter appear.

When this is accomplished, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the saving will be from the same source from whence the evil arose.

As to the national debt, however heavy the interest may be in taxes; yet, as it serves to keep alive a capital, useful to commerce, it balances by its effects a considerable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and silver in England is, by some means or other, short of its proper proportion*, (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it should be sixty,) it would, beside the injustice, be bad policy to extinguish a capital that serves to supply that defect. But with respect to the current expence, whatever is saved therefrom is gain. The excess may serve to keep corruption alive, but it has no re-action on credit and commerce, like the interest of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the English government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French revolution. Whatever serves to expose the intrigue and lessen the influence of courts, by lessening taxation, will be unwelcome to those who feed upon the spoil. Whilst the clamour of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden shoes could be kept up, the nation was easily allured and alarmed into taxes. Those days are now past; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its last harvest, and better times are in prospect for both countries, and for the world.

Taking it for granted, that an alliance may be formed between Eng-

* Foreign intrigues, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great measure account for the deficiency.

land, France, and America, for the purposes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expences of France and England may consequently be lessened. The same fleets and armies will no longer be necessary to either, and the reduction can be made ship for ship on each side. But to accomplish these objects, the governments must necessarily be fitted to a common and correspondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while an hostile disposition remains in either, or where mystery and secrecy on one side, is opposed to candour and openness on the other.

These matters admitted, the national expences might be put back, *for the sake of a precedent*, to what they were at some period when France and England were not enemies. This, consequently, must be prior to the Hanover succession, and also to the revolution of 1688*. The first instance that presents itself, antecedent to those dates, is in the very wasteful and profligate times of Charles the Second; at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have chosen a period of great extravagance, it will serve to shew

modern extravagance in a still worse light; especially as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue officers has not encreased since that time.

The peace establishment was then as follows:—See Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue.

Navy,	-	-	300,000
Army,	-	-	212,000
Ordnance,	-	-	40,000
Civil List,	-	-	462,115

£ 1,014,115

The parliament, however, settled the whole annual peace establishment at 1,200,000 †. If we go back to the time of Elizabeth, the amount of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation sees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of consequence.

All circumstances then taken together, arising from the French revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal interest of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both sides, and the progress of knowledge in the science of government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*

* I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power themselves; yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of that event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged six hundred thousand pounds for the expence of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the First acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds over and above his pay as king; and having thus purchased it at the expence of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the revolution.

† Charles, like his predecessors and successors, finding that war was the harvest of governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expence of which encreased the annual expenditure to £ 1,800,000, as stated under the date of 1666; but the peace establishment was but £ 1,200,000.

Navy,	—	—	500,000
Army,	—	—	500,000
Expences of government,			500,000
			£.1,500,000

Even this sum is six times greater than the expences of government are in America, yet the civil internal government in England, (I mean that administered by means of quarter sessions, juries, and assize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and performed by the nation,) is less expence upon the revenue, than the same species and portion of government is in America.

It is time that nations should be rational, and not be governed like animals, for the pleasure of their riders. To read the history of kings, a man would be almost inclined to suppose that government consisted in stag-hunting, and that every nation paid a million a year to a huntsman. Man ought to have pride, or shame enough to blush at being thus imposed upon, and when he feel his proper character, he will. Upon all subjects of this nature, there is often passing in the mind, a train of ideas he has not yet accustomed himself to encourage and communicate. Restrained by something that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite upon himself as well as to others. It is, however, curious to observe how soon this spell can be dissolved. A single expression, boldly conceived and uttered, will sometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings, and whole nations are acted upon in the same manner.

As to the offices of which any civil government may be composed, it matters but little by what names

they are described. In the routine of business, as before observed, whether a man be stiled a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or any thing else, it is impossible that any service he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten thousand pounds a year; and as no man should be paid beyond his services, so every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the most scrupulous consciousness of honour. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labour and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterness of want and misery. Not a beggar passes, or perishes in the streets, whose mite is not in that mass.

Were it possible that the Congress of America, could be so lost to their duty, and to the interest of their constituents, as to offer General Washington, as president of America, a million a year, he would not and he could not, accept it. His sense of honour is of another kind. It has cost England almost seventy millions sterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thousands in the nation; and scarcely a year has passed that has not produced some new mercenary application. Even the physicians bills have been sent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates encreased. Under such systems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it come, it must be from the nation, and not from the government.

To shew that the sum of five hundred thousand pounds is more than

sufficient to defray all the expences of government, exclusive of navies and armies, the following estimate is added for any country, of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two, or three houses, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a constitution shall direct.

As representation is always considered, in free countries, as the most honourable of all stations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expence which the representatives incur by that service, and not to it as an office.

If an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds *per ann.* be made to every representative, deducting for non attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended for six months, each year, would be

The official departments cannot reasonably exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed:

Three offices, at ten thousand pounds each	30,000
Ten ditto, at £. 5000 each	50,000
Twenty do. at £. 2000 each	40,000
Forty do. at £. 1000 each	40,000
Two hund. do. at £. 500 each	100,000
Three hd. do. at £. 200 each	60,000
Five hund. do. at £. 100 each	50,000
Seven hd. do. at £. 75 each	52,500

£. 497,500

If a nation chuse, it can deduct four *per cent.* from all offices, and make one of twenty thousand *per ann.*

All revenue officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore, are not in this estimation.

The foregoing is not offered as exact detail of offices, but to shew the number and rate of salaries which five hundred thousand pounds will support; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find business sufficient to justify even this expence. As to the manner in which office business is now performed, the Chiefs, in several offices, such as the post-office, and certain offices in the exchequer, &c. do little more than sign their names three or four times a year; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and an half as a sufficient peace establishment for all the honest purposes of government, which is three hundred thousand pounds more than the peace establishment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles the Second, (notwithstanding, as has been already observed, the pay and salaries of the army, navy, and revenue officers, continue the same as at that period,) there will remain a surplus of upwards of six millions out of the present current expences. The question then will be, how to dispose of this surplus.

Whoever has observed the manner in which trade and taxes twist themselves together, must be sensible of the impossibility of separating them suddenly.

First. Because the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the present stock.

Secondly. Because, on all those articles on which the duty is charged in the gross, such as *per* barrel, hog-head, hundred weight, or tun, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down so as fully to relieve the consumer, who purchases by the pint, or the pound. The last duty laid on strong beer and ale, was three shillings *per* barrel, which, if taken off, would lessen the purchase only half a farthing *per* pint, and consequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a greater part of the taxes, it will be necessary to look for such others as are free from this embarrassment, and where the relief will be direct and visible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the first place, then, the poor rates are a direct tax which every house-keeper feels, and who knows also, to a farthing, the sum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor rates is not positively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair, in his History of the Revenue, has stated it at £.2,100,587. A considerable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, instead of being relieved, are tormented. The expence, however, is the same to the parish from whatever cause it arises.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thousand pounds a year. This, though a large sum, is moderate, compared with the population. Birmingham is said to contain seventy thousand souls, and on a proportion of seventy thousand

to fourteen thousand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of poor-rates, taking the population of England at seven millions, would be but one million four hundred thousand pounds. It is, therefore, most probable, that the population of Birmingham is over-rated. Fourteen thousand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thousand souls, taking two millions of poor-rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the consequence of the excessive burthen of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themselves; and there were no poor-rates*. In the present state of things, a labouring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay less than between seven and eight pounds a year in taxes. He is not sensible of this, because it is disguised to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearneſs; but as the taxes take from him, at least, a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is consequently disabled from providing for a family, especially if himself, or any of them, are afflicted with sickness.

The first step, therefore, of practical relief, would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely, and in lieu thereof, to make a remission of taxes to the poor of double the amount of the present poor-rates, viz. four millions annually out of the surplus taxes. By this measure, the poor would be benefited two millions, and the house-keepers two millions. This alone would be equal to a reduction of one

* Poor-rates began about the time of Henry the Eighth, when the taxes began to encrease, and they have encreased as the taxes encreased ever since.

hundred and twenty millions of the national debt, and consequently equal to the whole expence of the American war.

It will then remain to be considered which is the most effectual mode of distributing this remission of four millions.

It is easily seen, that the poor are generally composed of large families of children, and old people past their labour. If these two classes are provided for, the remedy will so far reach to the full extent of the case, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great measure, fall within the compass of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked amongst the best of modern institutions.

Admitting England to contain seven million of souls; if one-fifth thereof are of that class of poor which need support, the number will be one million four hundred thousand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thousand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter shewn, and for which a distinct provision will be proposed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and sixty thousand, which, at five souls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thousand families, rendered poor from the expence of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of those families, will be found to be about five to every two families; some having two, and others three; some one, and others four; some none, and others five; but it rarely happens that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this

age they are capable of service or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families, The number of children will

be - - - - - 630,000

The number of parents were they all living, would be 504,000

It is certain, that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of consequence, because it is from the expence of bringing up children that their poverty arises.

Having thus ascertained the greatest number that can be supposed to need support on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief or distribution, which is,

To pay as a remission of taxes to every poor family, out of the surplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age; enjoining the parents of such children to send them to school, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic; the ministers of every parish, of every denomination, to certify jointly to an office, for that purpose, that this duty is performed.

The amount of this expence will be, For six hundred and thirty thousand children, at four pounds *per ann.* each, £.2,520,000

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be banished from the rising generation, and the number of poor will hereafter become less, because their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a mechanical trade, such as a carpenter, joiner,

millwright, shipwright, blacksmith, &c. is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the case of the aged.

I divide age into two classes. First, the approach of age beginning at fifty. Secondly, old age commencing at sixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigour, and his judgment better than at any preceding date, the bodily powers for laborious life are on the decline. He cannot bear the same quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn less, and is less capable of enduring wind and weather; and in those more retired employments where much sight is required, he fails apace, and sees himself, like an old horse, beginning to be turned adrift.

At sixty, his labour ought to be over, at least from direct necessity. It is painful to see old age working itself to death, in what are called civilized countries, for daily bread.

To form some judgment of the number of those above fifty years of age, I have several times counted the persons I met in the streets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is about one in sixteen or seventeen. If it be said that aged persons do not come much in the streets, so neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in schools, and in work-shops as apprentices. Taking then sixteen for a divisor, the whole number of persons, in England, of fifty years and upwards of both sexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thousand.

The persons to be provided for out of this gross number will be, husbandmen, common labourers, jour-

neymen of every trade and their wives, sailors, and disbanded soldiers, worn out servants of both sexes, and poor widows.

There will be also a considerable number of middling tradesmen, who having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to lose their business, and at last fall to decay.

Besides these, there will be constantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can stop, nor regulate, a number from every class of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all those accidents, and whatever else may befall, I take the number of persons, who at one time or other of their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it necessary or comfortable to be better supported, than they can support themselves, and that not as a matter of grace and favour, but of right, at one third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thousand, as stated in page 240, and for whom a distinct provision was proposed to be made. If there be more, society, notwithstanding the shew and pomposity of government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thousand, I take one half, seventy thousand, to be of the age of fifty and under sixty, and the other half to be sixty years and upwards. — Having thus ascertained the probable proportion of the number of aged persons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay to every such person of the age of fifty years, and until he shall arrive at the age of sixty, the sum of six pounds *per ann.* out of the surplus taxes; and ten pounds *per ann.* during

life after the age of sixty. The expence of which will be,

Seventy thousand persons at	
£.6 <i>per ann.</i>	- 420,000
Seventy thousand persons at	
£.10 <i>per ann.</i>	- 700,000
	£.1,120,000

This support, as already remarked, is not of the nature of a charity, but of a right. Every person in England, male and female, pays on an average in taxes, two pounds eight shillings and sixpence *per ann.* from the day of his (or her) birth; and if the expence of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven shillings and sixpence; consequently, at the end of fifty years he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen shillings; and at sixty, one hundred and fifty-four pounds ten shillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) individual tax into a tontine, the money he shall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal interest of the net money he has paid; the rest is made up from those whose circumstances do not require them to draw such support, and the capital in both cases defrays the expences of government. It is on this ground

that I have extended the probable claims to one third of the number of aged persons in the nation.—Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thousand aged persons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a year of public money be expended on any one individual, and him often of the most worthless or insignificant character? Let reason and justice, let honour and humanity, let even hypocrisy, sycophancy and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catharine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib, answer the question*.

The sum thus remitted to the poor will be,

To two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, containing six hundred and thirty thousand children,	- 2,520,000
To one hundred and forty thousand aged persons,	1,120,000
	£.3,640,000

There will then remain three hundred and sixty thousand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows:

After all the above cases are provided for, there will still be a number

* Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family, each family pays on an average, 12*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* *per ann.* to this sum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they consume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted, some as not being house-keepers, others as not being able, and the poor themselves who receive the relief. The average, therefore, of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty shillings for every family of five persons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates, 14*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* For six persons, 17*l.* 17*s.* For seven persons, 20*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

The average of taxes in America, under the new or representative system of government, including the interest of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four million of souls, which it now amounts to, and it is daily increasing, is five shillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two governments, is as under,

	England.	America.
For a family of five persons	14 <i>l.</i> 17 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	1 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>
For a family of six persons	17 17 0	1 10 0
For a family of seven persons	20 16 6	1 15 0

of families who, though not properly of the class of poor, yet find it difficult to give education to their children; and such children, under such a case, would be in a worse condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well regulated government, should permit none to remain uneducated. It is monarchical and aristocratical government only that requires ignorance for its support.

Suppose then four hundred thousand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number than ought to be supposed, after the provisions already made, the method will be,

To allow for each of those children ten shillings a year for the expence of schooling, for six years each, which will give them six months schooling each year, and half a crown a year for paper and spelling books.

The expence of this will be annually * £.250,000.

There will then remain one hundred and ten thousand pounds.

Notwithstanding the great modes of relief which the best instituted and best principled government may devise, there will still be a number of smaller cases, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to consider.

Were twenty shillings to be given to every woman immediately on the birth of a child, who should make the de-

mand, and none will make it beyond whose circumstances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of instant distress.

There are about two hundred thousand births yearly in England; and if claimed, by one fourth,

The amount would be £. 50,000

And twenty shillings to every new-married couple who should claim in like manner. This would not exceed the sum of - £. 20,000

Also twenty thousand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expences of persons, who, travelling for work, may die at a distance from their friends. By relieving parishes from this charge, the sick stranger will be better treated.

I shall finish this part of the subject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, such as London.

Cases are continually occurring in a metropolis different to those which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode of relief is necessary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other, and distress never rises to that extreme height it sometimes does in a metropolis. There is no such thing in the country as persons, in the literal sense of the word, starved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet

* Public schools do not answer the general purpose of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded; or if admitted, the distance occasions a great loss of time. Education, to be useful to the poor, should be on the spot; and the best method, I believe to accomplish this, is to enable the parents to pay the expence themselves. There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, especially when growing into years, capable of such an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten shillings each, (and that not more than six months each year) would be as much as some livings amount to in the remote parts of England; and there are often distressed clergymen's widows to whom such an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children answers two purposes, to them it is education, to those who educate them it is a livelihood.

such cases, and others equally as miserable, happen in London.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and with little or no money, and unless he gets immediate employment he is already half undone; and boys bred up in London without any means of a livelihood, and as it often happens of dissolute parents, are in a still worse condition. and servants long out of place are not much better off. In short, a world of little cases are continually arising, which busy or affluent life knows not of, to open the first door to distress. Hunger is not among the postponeable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in such a condition, is often the crisis of a life of ruin.

These circumstances, which are the general cause of the little thefts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thousand pounds out of the four millions of surplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thousand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpose. The plan then will be,

First, To erect two or more buildings, or take some already erected, capable of containing at least six thousand persons, and to have in each of these places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, so that every person who shall come may find something which he or she can do.

Secondly, To receive all who shall come, without enquiring who or what they are. The only condition to be, that for so much, or so many hours work, each person shall receive so many meals of wholesome food, and a warm lodging, at least as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of

what each person's work shall be worth shall be reserved, and given to him, or her, on their going away; and that each person shall stay as long, or as short time, or come as often as he chuse, on these conditions.

If each person staid three months, it would assist by rotation twenty-four thousand persons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but six thousand. By establishing an asylum of this kind, such persons to whom temporary distresses occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themselves, and be enabled to look out for better employment.

Allowing that their labour paid but one half the expence of supporting them, after reserving a portion of their earnings for themselves, the sum of forty thousand pounds additional would defray all other charges for even a greater number than six thousand.

The fund very properly convertible to this purpose, in addition to the twenty thousand pounds, remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, and so iniquitously and wantonly applied to the support of the Duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more especially at the price coals now are, should live on the distresses of a community; and any government permitting such an abuse, deserves to be dismissed. This fund is said to be about twenty thousand pounds *per annum*.

I shall now conclude this plan with enumerating the several particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows:

First, Abolition of two million poor-rates.

Secondly, Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families.

Thirdly, Education for one million and thirty thousand children.

Fourthly, Comfortable provision for one hundred and forty thousand aged persons.

Fifthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

Sixthly, Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

Seventhly, Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expences of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

Eighthly, Employment, at all times, for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superceded, and the wasteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as encreasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of distress and poverty, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there

are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, "Are we not well off," have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.

The plan is easy in practice. It does not embarrass trade by a sudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money necessary for the purpose can be drawn from the excise collections, which are made eight times a year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this subject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the present current expences at seven millions and an half which is the least amount they are now at, there will remain (after the sum of one million and an half be taken for the new current expences, and four millions for the beforementioned service) the sum of two millions; part of which to be applied as follows:

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in great measure, become useless, yet the persons who have devoted themselves to those services, and have thereby unfitted themselves for other lines of life, are not to be sufferers by the means that make others happy. They are a different description of men to those who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at least for some years, and also of the navy, for which a provision is already made in the former part of this plan of one million, which is almost half a million more than the peace establishment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles the Second.

Suppose then fifteen thousand soldiers to be disbanded, and to allow to

each of those men three shillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the same manner as the Chelsea College pensioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their friends ; and also to add fifteen thousand sixpences per week to the pay of the soldiers who shall remain ; the annual expence will be,

To the pay of fifteen thousand
disbanded soldiers, at three
shillings per week, - £117,000
Additional pay to the re-
maining soldiers, - 19,500
Suppose that the pay to the
officers of the disbanded
corps be of the same amount
as the sum allowed to the
men, - 117,000

253,500

To prevent bulky es-
timations, admit the same sum to
the disbanded navy as to
the army, and the same in-
crease of pay - 253,500

Total £.507,000

Every year some part of this sum of half a million (I omit the odd seven thousand pounds for the purpose of keeping the account unembarrassed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the encreased pay of twenty-nine thousand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off ; for instance, when thirty thousand pounds fall in the duty on hops may be wholly taken off ; and as other parts fall in, the duties on candles and soap may be lessened, till at last they will totally cease.

There now remains at least one million and an half of surplus taxes.

The tax on houses and windows is one of those direct taxes, which, like

the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade ; and, when taken off, the relief will be instantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middle class of people.

The amount of this tax by the re-
turns of 1788, was

Houses and windows by	l.	s.	d.
the act of 1766,	385,459	11	7
Ditto ditto by the act			
of 1779,	-	130,739	14 5½

Total £ 516,199 6 0½

If this tax be struck off, there will then remain about one million of surplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a sum in reserve, for incidental matters, it may be best not to extend reductions further, in the first instance, but to consider what may be accomplished by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes most heavily felt is the commutation tax. I shall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by substituting another in its place, which will affect three objects at once :

First, That of removing the bur-
then to where it can best be borne.

Secondly, Restoring justice among
families by a distribution of property.

Thirdly, Extirpating the overgrown
influence arising from the unnatural
law of primogeniture, and which is
one of the principal sources of cor-
ruption at elections.

The amount of the com-
mutation tax by the
returns of 1788, was, £771,657 0 0

When taxes are proposed, the coun-
try is amused by the plausible lan-
guage of taxing luxuries. One thing
is called a luxury at one time, and
something else at another ; but the
real luxury does not consist in the
article, but in the means of pro-

curing it, and this is always kept out of sight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field should be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown estate in either is a luxury at all times, and as such is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take those kind tax-making gentlemen up on their own word, and argue on the principle themselves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they, or their champion Mr. Burke, who, I fear, is growing out of date like the man in armour, can prove that an estate of twenty, thirty, or forty thousand pounds a year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual sum, say for instance, one thousand pounds is necessary or sufficient for the support of a family, consequently the second thousand is of the nature of a luxury, the third still more so, and by proceeding on, we shall at last arrive at a sum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would be impolitic to set bounds to property acquired by industry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition beyond the probable acquisition to which industry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, on the accumulation of it, by request. It should pass in some other line. The richest in every nation have poor relations, and those often very near in consanguinity.

The following table of progressive taxation is constructed on the above principles, and as a substitute for the commutation tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby supercede the aristocratical law of primogeniture.

TABLE I.

A tax on all estates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land tax, and up

	s.	d.
To £. 500 ..	0	3 per pound
From 500 to 1000	0	6 per pound
On the 2d thousand	0	9 per pound
On the 3d ditto	1	0 per pound
On the 4th ditto	1	6 per pound
On the 5th ditto	2	0 per pound
On the 6th ditto	3	0 per pound
On the 7th ditto	4	0 per pound
On the 8th ditto	5	0 per pound
On the 9th ditto	6	0 per pound
On the 10th ditto	7	0 per pound
On the 11th ditto	8	0 per pound
On the 12th ditto	9	0 per pound
On the 13th ditto	10	0 per pound
On the 14th ditto	11	0 per pound
On the 15th ditto	12	0 per pound
On the 16th ditto	13	0 per pound
On the 17th ditto	14	0 per pound
On the 18th ditto	15	0 per pound
On the 19th ditto	16	0 per pound
On the 20th ditto	17	0 per pound
On the 21st ditto	18	0 per pound
On the 22d ditto	19	0 per pound
On the 23d ditto	20	0 per pound

The foregoing table shews the progression per pound on every progressive thousand. The following table shews the amount of the tax on every thousand separately, and in the last column, the total amount of all the separate sums collected.

TABLE II.

l.	d.	l. s. d.
An estate of 50 p. an. at 3 per £. pays	0	12 6
100	3	1 5 0
200	3	2 10 0
300	3	3 15 0
400	3	5 0 0
500	3	6 5 0

After 500*l.*—the tax of fixpence per pound takes place on the second 500*l.*—consequently an estate of 1000*l.* *per ann.* pays 21*l.* 15*s.* and so on, For the

the					Total amount.
	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>
1st 500 at	0	3	<i>pr. p.</i>	7	5
2d 500 at	0	6		14	10
2d 1000 at	0	9		37	10
3d 1000 at	1	0		50	0
4th 1000 at	1	6		75	0
5th 1000 at	2	0		100	0
6th 1000 at	3	0		150	0
7th 1000 at	4	0		200	0
8th 1000 at	5	0		250	0
9th 1000 at	6	0		300	0
10th 1000 at	7	0		350	0
11th 1000 at	8	0		400	0
12th 1000 at	9	0		450	0
13th 1000 at	10	0		500	0
14th 1000 at	11	0		550	0
15th 1000 at	12	0		600	0
16th 1000 at	13	0		650	0
17th 1000 at	14	0		700	0
18th 1000 at	15	0		750	0
19th 1000 at	16	0		800	0
20th 1000 at	17	0		850	0
21st 1000 at	18	0		900	0
22d 1000 at	19	0		950	0
23d 1000 at	20	0		1000	0

At the twenty-third thousand the tax becomes twenty shillings in the pound, and consequently every thousand beyond that sum can produce no profit but by dividing the estate. Yet formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce so much as the commutation tax; should it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon estates under two or three thousand a year.

On small and middling estates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after seven or eight thousand a year that it begins to be heavy. The object is not so much the produce of the tax, as the justice of the measure. The aristocracy has screened itself too much, and this serves to restore a part of the lost equilibrium.

As an instance of its screening itself, it is only necessary to look back to the first establishment of the excise laws, at what is called the Restoration, or the coming of Charles the Second. The aristocratical interest then in power, commuted the feudal services itself was under by laying a tax on beer brewed for *sale*; that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from those services for themselves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The aristocracy do not purchase beer brewed for sale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time were necessary, it ought to have been at the expence of those for whom the exemptions from those services were intended*; instead of which it was thrown on an entire different class of men.

But the chief object of this progressive tax (besides the justice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as already stated, to extirpate the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good consequences to inquire how such vast

* The tax on beer brewed for sale, from which the aristocracy are exempt, is almost one million more than the present commutation tax, being by the returns of 1788, 1,666,152*l.* and consequently they ought to take on themselves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almost a million greater.

estates as thirty, forty, or fifty thousand a year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a state to admit of such acquisitions. Let it be sufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of descending again to the community, by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heiresses of those families. This will be the more necessary, because hitherto the aristocracy have quartered their younger children and connections upon the public in useless posts, places, and offices, which when abolished will leave them destitute, unless the law of primogeniture be also abolished or superseded.

A progressive tax will, in a great measure, effect this object, and that as a matter of interest to the parties most immediately concerned, as will be seen by the following table; which shews the nett produce upon every estate, after subtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an estate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thousand a year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and consequently, will pass to the younger children, or to other kindred.

T A B L E III.

Shewing the nett produce of every estate, from one thousand, to twenty-three thousand pounds a year.

No. of thousands per ann.	Total tax subtracted.	Nett produce.
1000 <i>l.</i>	21 <i>l.</i>	979 <i>l.</i>
2000	59	1941
3000	109	2891
4000	184	3816
5000	284	4716
6000	434	5566
7000	634	6366
8000	880	7120
9000	1180	7820

10,000	1530	8470
11,000	1930	9070
12,000	2380	9620
13,000	2880	10,120
14,000	3430	10,570
15,000	4030	10,970
16,000	4680	11,320
17,000	5380	11,620
18,000	6130	11,870
19,000	6930	12,170
20,000	7780	12,220
21,000	8680	12,320
22,000	9630	12,370
23,000	10,630	12,370

N. B. The odd shillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an estate cannot produce more than 12,370*l.* clear of the land tax and the progressive tax, and therefore the dividing such estates will follow as a matter of family interest. An estate of 23,000*l.* a year, divided into five estates of four thousand each and one of three, will be charged only 1129*l.* which is but five *per cent.* but if held by one possessor will be charged 10,630*l.*

Although an enquiry into the origin of those estates be unnecessary, the continuation of them in their present state is another subject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary estates, the law has created the evil, and it ought also to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be abolished, not only because it is unnatural and unjust, but because the country suffers by its operation. By cutting off (as before observed) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is loaded with the expence of maintaining them; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjust monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this

all. It occasions a waste of national property. A considerable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive by the great extent of parks and chases which this law serves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national consumption*. —In short, the evils of the aristocratical system are so great and numerous, so inconsistent with every thing that is just, wise, natural and beneficent, that when they are considered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now classed under that description, will wish to see such a system abolished.

What pleasure can they derive from contemplating the exposed condition, and almost certain beggary of their younger offspring? Every aristocratical family has an appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which in a few ages, or a few generations, are shook off, and console themselves with telling their tale in alms-houses, work-houses, and prisons. This is the natural consequence of aristocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the same family. One extreme produces the other: to make one rich many must be made poor; neither can the system be supported by other means.

There are two classes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hostile, and those the most helpless; younger children and the poor. Of the former I have just spoken; of the latter I shall mention one instance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I shall close this subject.

Several laws are in existence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houses? Personal labour is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy to be infringed? But the injustice will appear stronger, if we consider the operation and effect of such laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain stationary, while every thing else is in progression; and as those who make that law, still continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they encrease the expence of living by one law, and take away the means by another.

But if those gentlemen law-makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which personal labour can produce, and on which a whole family is to be supported, they certainly must feel themselves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not less than twelve thousand a year, and that of property they never acquired, (nor probably any of their ancestors) and of which they have made so ill a use.

Having now finished this subject, I shall bring the several particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The first EIGHT ARTICLES are brought forward from page 244, 245.

1. Abolition of two million poor-rates.

2. Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age;

* See the reports on the corn trade.

which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, provides also education for one million and thirty thousand children.

3. Annuity of six pounds (per ann.) each for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, or others (supposed seventy thousand) of the age of fifty years, and until sixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, and others (supposed seventy thousand) of the age of sixty years.

5. Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

6. Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expences of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

SECOND ENUMERATION.

9. Abolition of the tax on houses and windows.

10. Allowance of three shillings per week for life to fifteen thousand

disbanded soldiers, and a proportionate allowance to the officers of the disbanded corps.

11. Encrease of pay to the remaining soldiers of 19,500*l.* annually.

12. The same allowance to the disbanded navy, and the same encrease of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax.

14. Plan of a progressive tax, operating to extirpate the unjust and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the aristocratical system*.

There yet remains, as already stated, one million of surplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumstances that do not immediately present themselves, and such part as shall not be wanted, will admit a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among the claims that justice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any government to waste such an immensity of revenue in sinecures and nominal

* When enquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of distress will most probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already proposed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are husbands living. There is also a difference in the expence of living in different countries; and more so in fuel.

Suppose then fifty thousand extraordinary cases, at the rate of 10 <i>l.</i>	<i>£.</i>
per family per ann. —	500,000
100,000 Families, at 8 <i>l.</i> per family per ann. —	800,000
100,000 Families, at 7 <i>l.</i> per family per ann. —	700,000
104,000 Families, at 5 <i>l.</i> per family per ann. —	520,000
And instead of ten shillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty shillings per family for that purpose to fifty thousand families	250,000
	2,770,000
140,000 Aged persons as before,	1,120,000
	3,890,000

This arrangement amounts to the same sum as stated in page 242, including the 250,000*l.* for education; but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thousand families, which is almost one third of all the families in England.

and unnecessary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to those on whom the labour falls. The salary of the inferior officers of the revenue has stood at the petty pittance of less than fifty pounds a year, for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be seventy. About one hundred and twenty thousand pounds applied to this purpose, will put all those salaries in a decent condition.

This was proposed to be done almost twenty years ago, but the treasury-board then in being, startled at it, as it might lead to similar expectations from the army and navy; and the event was, that the King, or somebody for him, applied to parliament to have his own salary raised an hundred thousand a year, which being done, every thing else was laid aside.

With respect to another class of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition; but all partialities and prejudices for, or against, different modes and forms of religion aside, common justice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a year to one man, and of ten thousand to another. I speak on this subject with the more freedom, because I am known not to be a Presbyterian; and therefore the cant cry of court sycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuse and bewilder the nation, cannot be raised against me.

Ye simple men on both sides the question, do ye not see through this courtly craft? If ye can be kept disputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye just answer the purpose of every courtier, who lives the while on the spoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity. Every re-

ligion is good that teaches man to be good; and I know of none that instructs him to be bad.

All the before-mentioned calculations, suppose only sixteen millions and an half of taxes paid into the exchequer, after the expence of collection and drawbacks at the custom-house and excise-office are deducted; whereas the sum paid into the exchequer is very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. The taxes raised in Scotland and Ireland are expended in those countries, and therefore their savings will come out of their own taxes; but if any part be paid into the English exchequer, it might be remitted. This will not make one hundred thousand pounds a year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be considered. In the year 1789, the interest, exclusive of the tontine, was 9,150,138*l*. How much the capital has been reduced since that time the minister best knows. But after paying the interest, abolishing the tax on houses and windows, the commutation tax and the poor-rates; and making all the provisions for the poor, for the education of children, the support of the aged, the disbanded part of the army and navy, and encreasing the pay of the remainder, there will be a surplus of one million.

The present scheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, speaking as an indifferent person, to be an ill-concerted, if not a fallacious job. The burthen of the national debt consists not in its being so many millions, or so many hundred millions, but in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the interest. If this quantity continue the same, the burthen of the national debt is the same to all intents and purposes,

be the capital more or less. The only knowledge which the public can have of the reduction of the debt, must be through the reduction of taxes for paying the interest. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid ; and it would require more money now to purchase up the capital, than when the scheme began.

Digressing for a moment at this point, to which I shall return again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt, as minister.

I was then in America. The war was over ; and though resentment had ceased, memory was still alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had something in it which shocked, by publicly sporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in Lord North ; it was want of firmness in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the first mysteries of court-intrigue. Every thing was in his favour. Resentment against the coalition served as friendship to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and prosperity would rise of itself ; yet even this increase was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm the storm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his course. It required even ingenuity to be wrong, and he succeeded. A little time shewed him the same sort of man as his predecessors had been. Instead of profiting by those errors which had accumu-

lated a burthen of taxes unparalleled in the world, he fought, I might almost say, he advertised for enemies, and provoked means to encrease taxation. Aiming at something, he knew not what, he ransacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretensions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleasant to see character throw itself away. It is more so to see one's-self deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promised much. He gave symptoms of a mind superior to the meanness and corruption of courts. His apparent candour encouraged expectations ; and the public confidence, stunned, wearied, and confounded by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itself to him. But mistaking, as he has done, the disgust of the nation against the coalition, for merit in himself, he has rushed into measures, which a man less supported would not have presumed to act.

All this seems to shew that change of ministers amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and still the same measures, vices, and extravagance are pursued. It signifies not who is minister. The defect lies in the system. The foundation and the superstructure of the government is bad. Prop it as you please, it continually sinks into court government, and ever will.

I return, as I promised. to the subject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo revolution, and its handmaid the Hanover succession.

But it is now too late to enquire how it began. Those to whom it is due have advanced the money ; and whether it was well or ill spent, or

pocketed, is not their crime. It is, however, easy to see, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of government, and to understand taxes, and make comparisons between those of America, France and England, it will be next to impossible to keep it in the same torpid state it has hitherto been. Some reform must, from the necessity of the case, soon begin. It is not whether these principles press with little or much force in the present moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can stop them. Like a secret told, they are beyond recall; and he must be blind indeed that does not see that a change is already beginning.

Nine millions of dead taxes is a serious thing; and this not only for bad, but in a great measure for foreign government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of foreigners who came for what they could get, little else was to be expected than what has happened.

Reasons are already advanced in this work, shewing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expences of government, and not in the part applied to the interest of the national debt. By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved, and all discontent on their part will be taken away; and by striking off such of the taxes as are already mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expence of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a subject of discontent; and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the stock-holders themselves to consider it as property, subject

like all other property, to bear some portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and security, and as a great part of its present inconvenience is balanced by the capital which it keeps alive, a measure of this kind would so far add to that balance as to silence objections.

This may be done by such gradual means as to accomplish all that is necessary with the greatest ease and convenience.

Instead of taxing the capital, the best method would be to tax the interest by some progressive ratio, and to lessen the public taxes in the same proportion as the interest diminished.

Suppose the interest was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the first year, a penny more the second, and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always less than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be subtracted from the interest at the time of payment, without any expence of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would lessen the interest and consequently the taxes, twenty thousand pounds. The tax on waggons amounts to this sum, and this tax might be taken off the first year. The second year the tax on female servants, or some other of the like amount might also be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raised from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carry it to the current services, it would liberate itself.

The stockholders, notwithstanding this tax, would pay less taxes than they do now. What they would save by the extinction of the poor rates, and the tax on houses and windows, and the commutation tax, would be considerably greater than what this

tax, flow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for measures that may apply under any circumstance that may approach. There is, at this moment, a crisis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wisdom. If taxation be once let loose, it will be difficult to re-instate it; neither would the relief be so effectual, as to proceed by some certain and gradual reduction.

The fraud, hypocrisy, and imposition of governments, are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any longer career. The farce of monarchy and aristocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral. Let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very distant when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick for men, at the expence of a million a year, who understood neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a parish constable. If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it shall be said in any country in the world, my poor are happy: neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them; my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive; the rational world is my friend, because I am the friend of its happiness: when

these things can be said, then may that country boast its constitution and its government.

Within the space of a few years we have seen two Revolutions, those of America and France. In the former, the contest was long, and the conflict severe; in the latter, the nation acted with such a consolidated impulse, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both those instances it is evident, that the greatest forces that can be brought into the field of revolutions, are reason and common interest. Where these can have the opportunity of acting, opposition dies with fear, or crumbles away by conviction. It is a great standing which they have now universally obtained; and we may hereafter hope to see revolutions, or changes in governments, produced with the same quiet operation by which any measure, determinable by reason and discussion, is accomplished.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accomplished by reason. Rebellion consists in forcibly opposing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occasionally ascertaining the state of public opinion with respect to government. On this point the old government of France was superior to the present government of England, because, on extraordinary occasions, recourse could be had to what was then called the States General. But in England there are no such occasional bodies; and as to those who are

now called Representatives, a great part of them are mere machines of the court, placemen, and dependants.

I presume, that though all the people of England pay taxes, not an hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of the houses of parliament represent nobody but themselves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter respecting a general reform; and by the same right that two persons can confer on such a subject, a thousand may. The object, in all such preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general sense of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or chuse to pay ten times more taxes than there is occasion for, it has a right so to do; and so long as the majority do not impose conditions on the minority, different to what they impose on themselves, though there may be much error, there is no injustice. Neither will the error continue long. Reason and discussion will soon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By such a process no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceful and grateful in all reforms in which their interest and happiness is included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now press on the public attention are, the French revolution, and the prospect of a general revolution in governments. Of all nations in Europe, there is none so much interested in the French revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vast expence, and

without any national object, the opportunity now presents itself of amicably closing the scene, and joining their efforts to reform the rest of Europe. By doing this, they will not only prevent the further effusion of blood, and encrease of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a considerable part of their present burthens, as has been already stated. Long experience however has shewn, that reforms of this kind are not those which old governments wish to promote; and therefore it is to nations and not to such governments, that these matters present themselves.

In the preceding part of this work, I have spoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for purposes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reason to conclude, that she is disposed to enter into a consideration of such a measure, provided, that the governments with which she might ally, acted as national governments, and not as courts enveloped in intrigue and mystery. That France as a nation, and a national government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals, who have long been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing why, become the better friends when they discover the errors and impositions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of such a connection, I will state some matters by which such an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render service, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all Europe.

It is, I think, certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propose, with effect, a limitation to, and a general dismantling of all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

First, that no new ship of war shall be built by any power in Europe, themselves included.

Secondly, That all the navies now in existence shall be put back, supposed to one-tenth of their present force. This will save to France and England at least two millions sterling annually to each, and their relative force be in the same proportion as it is now. If men will permit themselves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and absurd, exclusive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expence of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can sink each other fastest. Peace, which costs nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expence. But this, though it best answers the purpose of nations, does not that of court governments, whose habited policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices.

It is, I think, also certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propose with effect, to Spain, the independence of South America, and the opening those countries of immense extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more, glory, and advantage to itself, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to rescue the world from bondage, and to create it-

self friends, than when it employs those powers to increase ruin, desolation, and misery. The horrid scene that is now acting by the English government in the East-Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, destitute of principles, robbed and tortured the world they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South America would produce an immense field of commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eastern world does not. The East is already a country full of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manufactures of England, but a drain upon its specie. The balance against England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually sent out in the East-India ships in silver; and this is the reason, together with German intrigue, and German subsidies, there is so little silver in England.

But any war is harvest to such governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It serves to keep up deceitful expectations which prevent a people looking into the defects and abuses of government. It is the *lo here!* and the *lo there!* that amuses and cheats the multitude.

Never did so great an opportunity offer itself to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two Revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the Western world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation shall join France, despotism and bad government will scarcely dare to appear. To use a trite expression, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The insulted German and the enslaved Spaniard, the Russ

and the Pole, are beginning to think. The present age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of Reason, and the present generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the governments of Europe shall be established on the representative system, nations will become acquainted, and the animosities and prejudices fomented by the intrigue and artifice of courts, will cease. The oppressed soldier will become a freeman; and the tortured sailor, no longer dragged along the streets like a felon, will pursue his mercantile voyage in safety. It would be better that nations should continue the pay of their soldiers during their lives, and give them their discharge and restore them to freedom and their friends, and cease recruiting, than retain such multitudes at the same expence, in a condition useless to society and themselves. As soldiers have hitherto been treated in most countries, they might be said to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehension of being enemies to liberty, and too often insulted by those who commanded them, their condition was a double oppression. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is restored to order; and the soldier civilly treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is easy to perceive that they may arise from two distinct causes; the one, to avoid or get rid of some great calamity; the other, to obtain some great and positive good; and the two may be distinguished by the names of active and passive revolutions. In those which proceed from the former cause, the temper becomes incensed and sow-

ered; and the redress, obtained by danger, is too often sullied by revenge. But in those which proceed from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters serenely upon the subject. Reason and discussion, persuasion and conviction, become the weapons in the contest, and it is only when those are attempted to be suppressed that recourse is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, such as relief from a burden of taxes and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accomplished. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will any man say, in the present excess of taxation, falling so heavily on the poor, that a remission of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thousand poor families is not a *good thing*? Will he say, that a remission of seven pounds annually to one hundred thousand other poor families—of eight pounds annually to another hundred thousand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thousand poor and widowed families, are not *good things*? And to proceed a step farther in this climax, will he say, that to provide against the misfortunes to which all human life is subject, by securing six pounds annually for all poor, distressed, and reduced persons of the age of fifty and until sixty, and of ten pounds annually after sixty, is not a *good thing*?

Will he say, that an abolition of two million of poor-rates to the housekeepers, and of the whole of the house and window-light tax and of the commutation tax is not a *good thing*? Or will he say, that to abolish corruption is a *bad thing*?

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a passive, rational, and costless revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that should force a violent one. I have no idea, considering the reforms which are now passing and spreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herself to be the last; and where the occasion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than wait for a turbulent necessity. It may be considered as an honour to the animal faculties of man to obtain redress by courage and danger, but it is far greater honour to the rational faculties to accomplish the same object by reason, accommodation, and general consent*.

As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you please, extend themselves among nations, those nations will form connections and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progress will be rapid, till despotism and corrupt government be totally expelled, at least out of two quarters of the world, Europe and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to cease, for it is only by the malicious policy of old governments, against each other, that it exists.

Throughout this work, various and numerous as the subjects are, which I have taken up and investigated, there is only a single paragraph upon religion, viz. "*that every religion is good, that teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the subject, because I am inclined to believe, that what is called the present ministry wish to see contentions about religion kept up, to prevent the nation turning its attention to subjects of government. It is, as if they were to say, "*Look that way, or any way, but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby destroyed, I will conclude this work with stating in what light religion appears to me.

If we suppose a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular circumstance, made it a custom to present to their parent some token of their friendship and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and most probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verse or prose, by some little devices, as their genius dictated, or according to what they thought would please; and, perhaps, the least of all, not

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* I know it is the opinion of many of the most enlightened characters in France (there always will be those who see farther into events than others) not only among the general mass of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the former National Assembly, that the monarchical plan will not continue many years in that country. They have found out, that as wisdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not; and that, for a man to merit a million sterling a year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a universe; which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wished not to appear to lead the nation faster than its own reason and interest dictated. In all the conversations where I have been present upon this subject, the idea always was, that when such a time, from the general opinion of the nation, shall arrive, that the honourable and liberal method would be, to make a handsome present in fee simple to the person whoever he may be, that shall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, possessing his share of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

able to do any of those things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettiest flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a simple weed. The parent would be more gratified by such variety, than if the whole of them had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the same offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harsh one of controul. But of all unwelcome things, nothing could more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, scratching, reviling, and abusing each other about which was the best or the worst present.

Why may we not suppose, that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act, is that by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable. For my own part, I am fully satisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavour to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war, and break the chains of slavery and oppression, is acceptable in his sight, and being the best service I can perform, I act it cheerfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought that appear to agree. It is in this case as with what is called the British constitution. It has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have supplied the place of proof. But when the nation come to examine into

principles and the abuses it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may, with as much propriety, talk of national Gods. It is either political craft or the remains of the Pagan system, when every nation had its separate and particular deity. Among all the writers of the English church clergy, who have treated on the general subject of religion, the present bishop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleasure that I take the opportunity of expressing this token of respect.

I have now gone through the whole of the subject, at least, as far as it appears to me at present. It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe, to offer an address to the people of England on the subject of government, if the opportunity presented itself before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occasion three years ago, I pressed him to propose a national convention to be fairly elected for the purpose of taking the state of the nation into consideration; but I found, that however strongly the parliamentary current was then setting against the party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and trust to accidents. Long experience had shewn that parliaments would follow any change of ministers, and on this they rested their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when divisions arose respecting governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. The savage custom is exploded

by the new system, and reference is had to national conventions. Discussion and the general will arbitrates the question, and to this, private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of *Rights of Man* are founded, "a new fangled doctrine." The question is not whether those principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppose the former, I will shew their effect by a figure easily understood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would present a leafless winterly appearance. As people are apt to pluck twigs as they go along, I perhaps might do the same, and by chance might ob-

serve, that a *single bud* on that twig had begun to swell. I should reason very unnaturally, or rather not reason at all, to suppose *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Instead of deciding thus, I should instantly conclude, that the same appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where; and though the vegetable sleep will continue longer on some trees and plants than on others, and though some of them may not *blossom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the summer, except those which are *rotten*. What pace the political summer may keep with the natural, no human foresight can determine. It is, however, not difficult to perceive that the spring is begun.—Thus wishing, as I sincerely do, freedom and happiness to all nations, I close the **SECOND PART**.

A P P E N D I X .

AS the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumstances considered, to state the causes that have occasioned the delay.

The reader will probably observe, that some parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's speech at the opening of the present session, Tuesday, January 31, are so much alike, as to induce a belief, that either the Author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the Author.—I will first point out the parts that are similar, and then state such circumstances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own conclusion.

Considering it almost an unprecedented case, that taxes should be proposed to be taken off, it is equally as extraordinary that such a measure should occur to two persons at the same time; and still more so, (considering the vast variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they should hit on the same specific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his speech, the tax on *Carts and Waggon*s—that on *Female Servants*—the lowering the tax on *Candles*, and the taking off the tax of three shillings on *Houses* having under seven windows.

Every one of those specific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and proposed also to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true,

goes no farther than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; and the reduction proposed in this work to nearly six millions and an half of revenue, still asserting that it was “very nearly, if not quite, “seventeen millions.” Mr. Pitt states it at 16,690,000. I know enough of the matter to say, that he has not overstated it. Having thus given the particulars, which correspond in this work and his speech, I will state a chain of circumstances that may lead to some explanation.

The first hint for lessening the taxes, and that as a consequence flowing from the French revolution, is to be found in the ADDRESS and DECLARATION of the Gentlemen who met at the Thatched-House Tavern, August 20, 1791. Among many other particulars stated in that Address, is the following, put as an interrogation to the government opposers of the French Revolution. “*Are they sorry that the “pretence for new oppressive taxes, “and the occasion for continuing many “old taxes will be at an end?*”

It is well known, that the persons who chiefly frequent the Thatched House Tavern, are men of court connections, and so much did they take this Address and Declaration respecting the French revolution and the reduction of taxes in disgust, that the Landlord was under the necessity of informing the Gentlemen, who composed the meeting of the twentieth

of August, and who proposed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them*.

What was only hinted at in the Address and Declaration respecting taxes and principles of government, will be found reduced to a regular system in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's speech contains some of the same things respecting taxes, I now come to give the circumstances before alluded to.

The case is: This work was intended to be published just before the meeting of Parliament, and for that purpose a considerable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, as far as page 160, which contains the part to which Mr. Pitt's speech is similar, was given to him full six weeks before the meeting of parliament, and he was informed of the time at which it was to appear. He had composed nearly the whole about a fortnight before the time of Parliament meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next sheet, up to page 128. It was then in sufficient forwardness to be out at the time proposed, as two other sheets were ready for striking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he should be straightened for time, I would get part of the work done at

another press, which he desired me not to do. In this manner the work stood on the Tuesday fortnight preceding the meeting of Parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, the though I had been with him the evening before, he sent me, by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any consideration*.

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loss, as he stopped at the part where the arguments on systems and principles of government closed, and where the plan for the reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the support of the poor and the aged begins; and still more especially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had seen the whole copy, offered a thousand pounds for the copyright, together with the future copyright of the former part of the Rights of Man. I told the person who brought me this offer that I should not accept it, and wished it not to be renewed, giving him as my reason, that though I believed the printer to be an honest man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publisher to suppress or alter a work of mine, by making him master of the copy, or give to him the right of selling it to any minister,

* The gentleman who signed the address and declaration as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Horne Tooke, being generally supposed to be the person who drew it up, and having spoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accused of praising his own work. To free him from this embarrassment, and to save him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he has not failed to do, I make no hesitation in saying that as the opportunity of benefiting by the French Revolution easily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in question, and shewed it to him and some other gentlemen; who, fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpose of making it public, and subscribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expence of advertising. I believe there are at this time, in England, a greater number of men acting on disinterested principles, and determined to look into the nature and practices of government themselves, and not blindly trust, as has hitherto been the case, either to government generally, or to parliaments, or to parliamentary opposition, than at any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.

or to any other person, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended should operate as a principle.

His refusal to complete the work (which he could not purchase) obliged me to seek for another printer, and this of consequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of Parliament, otherwise it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully stated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had seen the work or any part of it, is more than I have authority to say. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are suspicious circumstances. I know what the opinion of booksellers and publishers is upon such a case, but as to my own opinion, I chuse to make no declaration. There are many ways by which proof sheets may be procured by other persons before a work publicly appears; to which I shall add a certain circumstance, which is,

A ministerial bookseller in Piccadilly who has been employed, as common report says, by a clerk of one of the boards closely connected with the ministry (the board of trade and plantation of which Hawkebury is president) to publish what he calls my *Life* (I wish his own life and that those of the cabinet were as good) used to have his books printed at the same printing-office that I employed; but when the former part of *Rights of Man* came out, he took his work away in a dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would consequently give him admission into

the printing-office where the sheets of this work were then lying; and as book-sellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of seeing what was going on.—Be the case however as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have had a very awkward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finish it.

I have now stated the particulars which occasioned the delay, from the proposal to purchase, to the refusal to print. If all the Gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that such a variety of suspicious circumstances should, without any design, arrange themselves together.

Having now finished this part, I will conclude with stating another circumstance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of Parliament, a small addition, amounting to about twelve shillings and six pence a year, was made to the pay of the soldiers, or rather, their pay was docked so much less. Some Gentlemen who knew in part, that this work would contain a plan of reforms respecting the oppressed condition of soldiers, wished me to add a note to the work, signifying, that the part upon that subject had been in the printer's hands some weeks before that addition of pay was proposed. I declined doing this, lest it should be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavour to excite suspicion (for which perhaps there might be no grounds) that some of the government gentlemen, had, by some means or other, made out what this work would contain; and had not the printing been interrupted so as to occasion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.

P A I N E ' s W O R K S .

L E T T E R

ADDRESSED TO THE

A D D R E S S E E R S ,

ON THE LATE

P R O C L A M A T I O N .

COULD I have commanded circumstances with a wish, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progress of knowledge, than the late Proclamation, and the numerous rotten Borough and Corporation Addresses thereon. They have not only served as advertisements, but they have excited a spirit of enquiry into principles of government, and a desire to read the RIGHTS OF MAN, in places, where that spirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and stunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almost resigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curiosity had expired, and a universal languor had spread itself over the land. The opposition was visibly no other than a contest for power, whilst the mass of the nation stood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeless state of things, the First Part of RIGHTS OF MAN made its appearance. It had to combat with a strange mixture of prejudice and indifference; it stood exposed to every species of newspaper abuse; and besides this, it had to remove the obstructions which Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French Revolution had artfully raised.

But how easily does even the most illiterate reader distinguish the spontaneous sensations of the heart, from the laboured productions of the brain! Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a thing so naturally familiar to the mind, that an acquaintance commences at first sight. No artificial light, yet discovered, can display all the properties of day-light; so neither can the best invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious work was scarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of Placemen and Pensioners, who had given the tone to the multitude, by clamouring forth his political fame, became suddenly silent; and the final event to himself has been, that as he rose like a rocket, he fell like the stick.

It seldom happens, that the mind rests satisfied with the simple detection of error or imposition.—Once put into motion, *that* motion soon becomes accelerated: where it had intended to stop, it discovers new reasons to proceed, and renews and continues the pursuit far beyond the limits it first prescribed to itself.—Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapsodies, and distorted facts, they began an enquiry into first principles of Government, whilst himself, like an object left far behind, became invisible and forgotten.

Much as the First Part of RIGHTS OF MAN impressed at its first appearance, the progressive mind soon discovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors; it exposed absurdities; it shook the fabric of political superstition; it generated new ideas; but it did not produce a regular system of principles in the room of those which it displaced. And, if I may guess at the mind of the Government party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would soon blow over, and they forbore, like sailors in threatening weather, to whistle, lest they should encrease the wind. Every thing, on their part, was profound silence.

When the Second Part of "RIGHTS OF MAN, *combining Principle and Practice*," was preparing to appear, they affected, for a while, to act with

the same policy as before; but finding their silence had no more influence in stilling the progress of the work, than it would have in stopping the progress of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The Speech-making Placemen and Pensioners, and Place-expectants, in both Houses of Parliament, the *Outs* as well as the *Ins*, represented it as a silly, insignificant performance; as a work incapable of producing any effect; as something, which they were sure the good sense of the people would either despise or indignantly spurn; but such was the overstrained awkwardness with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence they betrayed their fears.

As most of the rotten Borough Addressers are obscured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a newspaper arrives as rarely as an almanac, they most probably have not had the opportunity of knowing how this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the Addresses) has been acted. For *their* information, I will suspend a while the more serious purpose of my Letter, and entertain them with two or three Speeches in the last Session of Parliament, which will serve them for politics till Parliament meets again.

You must know, Gentlemen, that the Second Part of RIGHTS OF MAN, (the book against which you have been presenting Addresses, though it is most probable, that many of you did not know it) was to have come out precisely at the time that Parliament last met. It happened not to be published till a few days after. But as it was well known that the book would shortly appear, the parliamentary Ora-

tors entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the *blessings* of the Constitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, you could not but have been moved to the heart-and-pockets-felt congratulations that passed between all the parties on this subject of *blessings* ; for the *Outs* enjoy places and pensions and sinecures as well as the *Ins* , and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the house.

One of the most conspicuous of this motley groupe is the Clerk of the Court of King's Bench, who calls himself Lord Stormont. He is also called Justice General of Scotland, and Keeper of Scoon (an opposition man) and he draws from the public for these nominal offices, not less, as I am informed, than six thousand pounds a year, and he is, most probably, at the trouble of counting the money, and signing a receipt, to shew, perhaps, that he is qualified to be Clerk as well as Justice. He spoke as follows : *

“ THAT *we* shall *all* be unanimous,
 “ in expressing *our* attachment to the
 “ constitution of these realms, *I am*
 “ *confident* . It is a subject upon
 “ which there can be *no* divided opi-
 “ nion in *this house* . I do not pre-
 “ tend to be deep read in the know-
 “ ledge of the Constitution, but *I*
 “ *take upon me* to say, that from the
 “ extent of *my* knowledge (*for I*
 “ *have so many thousands a year for*
 “ *nothing*) it appears to *me* , that
 “ from the period of the Revolution,
 “ for it was by no means created then,
 “ it has been, both in *theory* and *prac-*
 “ *tice* , the *wisest* system that ever was
 “ formed. I never was, (he means

“ he never was *till now*) a dealer in
 “ *political cant* . My life has not
 “ been occupied in *that way* , but the
 “ speculations of late years *seem to*
 “ *have taken a turn, for which I can-*
 “ *not account* . When I came into
 “ public life, the political pamphlets
 “ of the time, however they might
 “ be charged with the heat and vio-
 “ lence of parties, were agreed in
 “ extolling the radical beauties of the
 “ Constitution itself. I remember
 “ (*he means he has forgotten*) a most
 “ captivating eulogium on its *charms*
 “ by Lord Bolingbroke, where he re-
 “ commends his readers to contem-
 “ plate it in all respects, with the as-
 “ surance that it would be found more
 “ estimable the more it was *seen* . *I*
 “ *do not recollect* his precise words,
 “ but I wish that men who write upon
 “ these subjects would take *this for*
 “ *their model* , instead of the political
 “ pamphlets, which I am told, are
 “ now in circulation, (such, I sup-
 “ pose, as *Rights of Man*)—pam-
 “ phlets which I have *not read* , and
 “ whose purport I know only by *re-*
 “ *port* , (he means perhaps by the *noise*
 “ they make.) This, however, *I*
 “ am sure, that pamphlets tending
 “ to unsettle the public reverence for
 “ the *constitution* , will have very little
 “ influence. They can do very little
 “ harm—for (*by the by, he is no dealer*
 “ *in political cant*) the *English* are a
 “ *sober thinking people, and are more*
 “ *intelligent, more solid, more steady in*
 “ *their opinions, than any people I ever*
 “ *had the fortune to see* . (This is
 “ pretty well laid on, though, for a
 “ new beginner.) But if there should
 “ ever come a time when the propa-
 “ gation of those doctrines should

* See his Speech in the Morning Chronicle of Feb. 1.

“ agitate the public mind, I am
 “ sure, for every one of your Lord-
 “ ships, that no attack will be made
 “ on the constitution, from which
 “ it is truly said that we derive all
 “ our prosperity, without raising
 “ every one of your Lordships to its
 “ support. It will then be found
 “ that there is no difference among
 “ us, but that we are all determined
 “ to stand or fall together, in defence
 “ of the inestimable system”—of
 places and pensions.

After Stormont, on the opposition
 side, sat down, up rose another noble
 Lord! on the ministerial side, Gren-
 ville. This man ought to be as
 strong in the back as a mule, or the
 fire of a mule, or it would crack with
 the weight of places and offices. He
 rose, however, without feeling any
 incumbrance, full master of his
 weight; and thus said this noble Lord
 to t'other noble Lord!

“ The patriotic and manly manner
 “ in which the noble Lord has de-
 “ clared his sentiments on the subject
 “ of the constitution, demands my
 “ cordial approbation. The noble
 “ Viscount has proved, that however
 “ we may differ on particular mea-
 “ sures, amidst all the jars and disso-
 “ nance of parties, we are unani-
 “ mous in principle. There is a per-
 “ fect and entire consent (between us)
 “ in the love and maintenance of the
 “ constitution as happily subsisting.
 “ It must undoubtedly give your Lord-
 “ ships concern, to find, that the time
 “ is come! (heigh ho!) when there is
 “ propriety in these expressions of re-
 “ gard TO (o! o! o!) THE CONSTI-
 “ TUTION. And that there are men
 “ (confound—their—po-li-tics) who
 “ disseminate doctrines hostile to the
 “ genuine spirit of our well balanced

“ system, (it is certainly well balanced
 “ when both sides hold places and
 “ pensions at once.) I agree with
 “ the noble Viscount that they have
 “ not (I hope) much success. I am
 “ convinced that there is no danger
 “ to be apprehended from their at-
 “ tempts: but it is truly important
 “ and consolatory (to us place-men, I
 “ suppose) to know, that if there
 “ should ever arise a serious alarm,
 “ there is but one spirit, one sense,
 “ (and that sense, I presume is not
 “ common sense) and one determina-
 “ tion in this house.”—which un-
 doubtedly is to hold all their places
 and pensions as long as they can.

Both those speeches (excepting the
 parts enclosed in parentheses, which
 are added for the purpose of illustra-
 tion) are copied verbatim from the
 Morning Chronicle of the 1st of Fe-
 bruary last; and when the situation
 of the speakers is considered, the one
 in the opposition, and the other in the
 ministry, and both of them living at
 the public expence, by sinecure, or
 nominal places and offices, it required
 a very unblushing front to be able to
 deliver them. Can those men seriously
 suppose any nation to be so completely
 blind as not to see through them?
 Can Stormont imagine that the poli-
 tical cant, with which he has larded
 his harangue, will conceal the craft?
 Does he not know that there never
 was a cover large enough to hide it-
 self? Or can Grenville believe, that
 his credit with the public encreases
 with his avarice for places?

But, if these orators will accept a
 service from me, in return for the al-
 lusions they have made to the *Rights of*
Man, I will make a speech for either
 of them to deliver on the excellence of
 the constitution, that shall be as much

to the purpose as what they have spoken, or as *Bolingbroke's captivating encomium*. Here it is.

‘ THAT we shall all be unanimous in expressing our attachment to the constitution, I am confident. It is, my Lords, incomprehensibly good: but the great wonder of all is the wisdom; for it is, my Lords, *the wisest system that ever was formed*.

‘ With respect to us noble Lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wisdom than we know what to do with; and what is still better, my Lords, we have it all in stock. I defy your Lordships to prove, that a tittle of it has been used yet; and if we do but go on, my Lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we shall leave to our heirs and successors, when we go out of the world, the whole stock of wisdom, *untouched*, that we brought in; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my Lords, is one of the blessed effects of the hereditary system; for we can never be without wisdom so long as we keep it by us, and do not use it.

‘ But, my Lords, as all this wisdom is hereditary property, for the sole benefit of us and our heirs, and it is necessary that the people should know where to get a supply for their own use, the excellence of our constitution has provided a King for this very purpose, and for *no other*. But, my Lords, I perceive a defect to which the constitution is subject, and which I propose to remedy by bringing a bill into Parliament for that purpose.

‘ The constitution, my Lords, out of delicacy, I presume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a King whether he will be wise or not. It has not,

I mean, my Lords, insisted upon it as a constitutional point, which, I conceive, it ought to have done; for I pledge myself to your Lordships to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldness*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. The bill, my Lords, that I shall bring in will be to declare, that the constitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not invest the King with this choice; our ancestors were too wise to do that; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwise arise, I shall prepare, my Lords, an enacting clause, to fix the wisdom of Kings, by act of Parliament; and then, my Lords, our Constitution will be the wonder of the world!

‘ Wisdom, my Lords, is the one thing needful; but that there may be no mistake in this matter, and that we may proceed consistently with the true wisdom of the constitution, I shall propose a *certain criterion*, whereby the *exact quantity of wisdom* necessary for a King may be known. [Here should be a cry of Hear him! Hear him!]

‘ It is recorded, my Lords, in the Statutes at Large of the Jews, “ a “ book, my Lords, which I have not “ read, and whose purport I know “ only by report,” *but perhaps the bench of Bishops can recollect something about it*, that Saul gave the most convincing proofs of royal wisdom before he was made a King, *for he was sent to seek his father's asses, and he could not find them*.

‘ Here, my Lords, we have, most happily for us, a case in point: This precedent ought to be established by act of Parliament; and every King, before he be crowned, should be sent to seek his father's asses, and if he cannot find them, he shall be declared

wise enough to be King, according to the true meaning of our excellent constitution. All, therefore, my Lords, that will be necessary to be done, by the enacting clause that I shall bring in, will be to invest the King before-hand with the quantity of wisdom necessary for this purpose, lest he should happen not to possess it; and this, my Lords, we can do without making use of any of our own.

‘ We further read, my Lords, in the said Statutes at Large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any Man-of-Rights-Man now a-days, (hear him! hear him!) was highly displeased, and even exasperated, at the proposal of the Jews to have a King, and he warned them against it with all that assurance and impudence of which he was master. I have been, my Lords, at the trouble of going all the way to *Paternoster-row*, to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I should meet with it there, or in *Amen-corner*, for I was then going, my Lords, to rummage for it among the curiosities of the *Antiquarian Society*.—I will read the extract to your Lordships, to shew how little Samuel knew of the matter.

‘ The extract, my Lords, is from *Samuel*, chap. 8.

“ And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a King.

“ And he said, This will be the manner of the King that shall reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

“ And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his

ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

“ And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

“ And he will take your fields, and your vine-yards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

“ And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

“ And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

“ And he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants.

“ And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your King, which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you on that day.”

‘ Now, my Lords, what can we think of this man Samuel? Is there a word of truth, or any thing like truth, in all that he has said? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wise man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary? Look around, my Lords, and see if any thing has happened that he pretended to foretell? Has not the most profound peace reigned throughout the world ever since Kings were in fashion? Are not, for example, the present Kings of Europe the most peaceable of mankind, and the Empress of Russia the very milk of human kindness? It would not be worth having Kings, my Lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

‘ If we look at home, my Lords, do we not see the same things here as

are seen every where else? Are our young men taken to be horsemen, or foot soldiers, any more than in Germany or in Prussia, or in Hanover or in Hesse? Are not our sailors as safe at land as at sea? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the slaughter-house, to serve on board ships of war? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the merchandize of distant countries, does not every man sit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect security? Is the tenth of our seed taken by tax gatherers, or is any part of it given to the King's servants? In short, *is not every thing as free from taxes as the light from Heaven?*

' Ah! my Lords, do we not see the blessed effect of having Kings in every thing we look at? Is not the G. R. or the broad R. stamp'd upon every thing? Even the shoes, the gloves, and the hats that we wear, are enriched with the impression, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

' Besides these blessings, my Lords, that cover us from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, do we not see a race of youths growing up to be Kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my Lords, but might be trusted with untold gold, as safely as the other. Are they not "*more sober, more intelligent, more solid, more steady,*" and withall, more learned, more wise, more every thing, than any youths *we "ever had the fortune to see."* Ah! my Lords, they are a *hopeful family.*

' The blessed prospect of succession, which the nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a most undeniable proof of the excellence of our constitution, and of the blessed heredita-

ry system; for nothing, my Lords, but a constitution founded on the truest and purest wisdom, could admit such heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the government.—Permit me now, my Lords, to recal your attention to the libellous chapter I have just read about Kings. I mention this, my Lords, because it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into Parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible, and that the Lord Chancellor, with the assistance of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the Duke of Clarence, be requested to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do see that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inserted.'—FINIS.

If the Clerk of the Court of King's Bench should chuse to be the orator of this luminous encomium on the constitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempt to deliver it, and not to have to apologize to Parliament, as he did in the case of Bolingbroke's encomium, for forgetting his lesson; and, with this admonition, I leave him.

Having thus informed the Addressers of what passed at the meeting of Parliament, I return to take up the subject at the part where I broke off, in order to introduce the preceding speeches.

I was then stating, that the first policy of the Government party was silence, and the next, clamorous contempt; but as people generally choose to read and judge for themselves, the work still went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the silence that preceded it, passed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their second scheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wisp, led them to a third; when all at

once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, Mr. Dundas had discovered it by second sight, this once harmless, insignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a single letter, became a most wicked and dangerous Libel. The whole Cabinet, like a ship's crew, became alarmed; all hands were piped upon deck, as if a conspiracy of elements was forming around them; and out came the Proclamation and the Prosecution; and Addresses supplied the place of prayers.

Ye silly swains, thought I to myself, why do you torment yourselves thus? The RIGHTS OF MAN is a book calmly and rationally written; why then are you so disturbed? Did you see how little or how suspicious such conduct makes you appear, even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would hush you into prudence. The plans, principles, and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the nation, and of the world, in a fair, open, and manly manner, and nothing more is necessary than to refute them. Do this, and the whole is done; but if ye cannot, so neither can ye suppress the reading, nor convict the Author; for that Law, in the opinion of all good men, would convict itself, that should condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now shewn the Addressers the several stages of the business, prior to their being called upon, like Cæsar in the Tyber, crying to Cassius, "*help, Cassius, or I sink!*" I next come to remark on the policy of the Government, in promoting Addressers; on the consequences naturally resulting therefrom; and on the conduct of the persons concerned.

With respect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and

feature of disguised fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the history of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet should be produced by an individual, unconnected with any sect or party, and not seeking to make any, and almost a stranger in the land, that should completely frighten a whole Government, and that in the midst of its most triumphant security. Such a circumstance cannot fail to prove, that either the pamphlet has irresistible powers, or the Government very extraordinary defects, or both. The Nation exhibits no signs of fear at the Rights of Man; why then should the Government, unless the interest of the two are really opposite to each other, and the secret is beginning to be known? That there are two distinct classes of men in the nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at first sight; and when taxation is carried to excess, it cannot fail to disunite those two, and something of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is also curious to observe, amidst all the fume and bustle about Proclamations and Addresses, kept up by a few noisy and interested men, how little the mass of the nation seem to care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they shew, not to believe a word the Proclamation contains; and as to the Addresses, they travel to London with the silence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the Gazette, are deposited with the ashes of their predecessors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacent*.

One of the best effects which the Proclamation, and its echo the Addresses have had, has been that of exciting and spreading curiosity; and it

requires only a single reflection to discover, that the object of all curiosity is knowledge. When the mass of the nation saw that Placemen, Pensioners, and Borough-mongers, were the persons that stood forward to promote Addressees, it could not fail to create suspicions that the public good was not their object; that the character of the books, or writings, to which such persons obscurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they described them to be, and that it was necessary that every man, for his own satisfaction, should exercise his proper right, and read and judge for himself.

But how will the persons who have been induced to read the *Rights of Man*, by the clamour that has been raised against it, be surprized to find, that, instead of a wicked, inflammatory work, instead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of government that are uncontrovertible—with arguments which every reader will feel, are unanswerable—with plans for the increase of commerce and manufactures—for the extinction of war—for the education of the children of the poor—for the comfortable support of the aged and decayed persons of both sexes—for the relief of the army and navy, and, in short, for the promotion of every thing that can benefit the moral, civil and political condition of man.

Why, then, some calm observer will ask, why is the work prosecuted, if these be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend; it contains also a plan for the reduction of taxes, for lessening the immense expences of Government, for abolishing Places and Pensions; and it proposes applying the redundant taxes, that shall be saved by these reforms, to the

purposes mentioned in the former paragraph, instead of applying them to the support of idle and profligate Placemen and Pensioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that Placemen and Pensioners, and the whole train of Court expectants, should become the promoters of Addressees, Proclamations, and Prosecutions? or, is it any wonder that Corporations and rotten Boroughs, which are attacked and exposed, both in the First and Second Parts of *Rights of Man*, as unjust monopolies and public nuisances, should join in the cavalcade? Yet these are the sources from which Addressees have sprung. Had not such persons come forward to oppose the *Rights of Man*, I should have doubted the efficacy of my own writings: but those opposers have now proved to me, that the blow was well directed, and they have done it justice, by confessing the smart.

The principal deception in this business of Addressees has been, that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have assumed to pass themselves upon the public, as a part of the public bearing a share of the burthen of Taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that adds to the public burthen, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public what the locusts are to the tree: the burthen would be less, and the prosperity would be greater, if they were shaken off.

“ I do not come here,” said ONSLOW, at the Surry County Meeting, “ as Lord Lieutenant and Custos Roturum of the county, but I come here as a plain country gentleman.” The fact is, that he came there as what he was, and as no other, and

consequently he came as one of the beings I have been describing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public, as a pauper is by the parish, Onslow has a fair claim to the title ; and the same description will suit the Duke of Richmond, who led the Address at the Suffex meeting.— He also may set up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county, (Kent) it was a scene of disgrace. About two hundred persons met, when a small part of them drew privately away from the rest, and voted an Address : the consequence of which was, that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot in the very act of producing an Address to prevent Riots.

That the Proclamation and the Addresses have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the silence which the Government party itself observes. The number of Addresses has been weekly retailed in the Gazette ; but the number of Addressers has been concealed. Several of the Addresses have been voted by not more than ten or twelve persons ; and a considerable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of Addresses presented at the time of writing this letter is three hundred and twenty, (rotten Boroughs and Corporations included) and even admitting, on an average, one hundred Addressers to each Address, the whole number of Addressers would be but thirty-two thousand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number. That the success of the Proclamation has been less than the success of the Work it was intended to discourage, is a matter within my own knowledge ; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the

First and Second Parts of RIGHTS OF MAN has been sold in the space only of one month, than the whole number of Addressers (admitting them to be thirty-two thousand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any Government to say to a Nation, “ *thou shalt not read.* ” This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old Government of France ; but it served to procure the downfall of the latter, and is subverting that of the former ; and it will have the same tendency in all countries ; because *thought*, by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If *Rights of Man* were a book that deserved the vile description which the promoters of the Address have given of it, why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly ? This most certainly ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths, which those time servers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know ; and it is now following up the Addresses in every part of the nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the Proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the Justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of General Warrants, and to suppress, by their own authority, whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power, equalled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic governments in Europe, and yet

those Justices affect to call England a Free Country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country, by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its Rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such Justices has been, that of threatening to take away the licences from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighbourhood associated to read and discuss the principles of Government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any Government must be bad, when that Government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the Government, or the Constitution, or by whatever name it be called, be that miracle of perfection which the Proclamation and the Addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas, every attempt it makes, either by Proclamation, Prosecution, or Address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from enquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse, that have been published against the "RIGHTS OF MAN," have fallen before it like pointless arrows; and, in like manner, would any work have fallen before the Constitution, had the Constitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political princi-

ples as those on which the RIGHTS OF MAN is written.

It is a good Constitution for courtiers, placemen, pensions, borough-holders, and the leaders of Parties, and these are the men that have been the active leaders of Addresses; but it is a bad Constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, first, because it entails upon the nation the unnecessary expence of supporting three forms and systems of Government at once, namely, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical.

Secondly, because it is impossible to unite such a discordant composition by any other means than perpetual corruption; and therefore the corruption so loudly and so universally complained of, is no other than the natural consequence of such an unnatural compound of Governments; and in this consists that excellence which the numerous herd of placemen and pensioners so loudly extol, and which, at the same time, occasions that enormous load of taxes under which the rest of the nation groans.

Among the mass of national delusions calculated to amuse and impose upon the multitude, the standing one has been, that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the Government, (or as they please to express it, the English Constitution) "*the envy and the admiration of the world.*" Scarcely an Address has been voted in which some of the speakers have not uttered this hackneyed nonsensical falsehood.

Two Revolutions have taken place, those of America and France; and both of them have rejected the unna-

tural compounded system of the English Government. America has declared against all hereditary Government, and established the representative system of Government only. France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering the absurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the representative system. On what ground, then, do these men continue a declaration, respecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other nations*, which the voluntary practice of such nations, as have had the opportunity of establishing Government, contradicts and falsifies. Will such men never confine themselves to truth? Will they be forever the deceivers of the people?

But I will go farther, and shew, that, were Government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to establish the same system they now submit to.

In speaking upon this subject (or on any other) *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent cease to be authority, and hoary-headed error loses its effect. The reasonableness and propriety of things must be examined abstractedly from custom and usage; and in this point of view, the right which grows into practice to-day is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory, as if it had the customary sanction of a thousand ages. Principles have no connection with time, nor characters with names.

To say that the Government of this country is composed of King, Lords, and Commons, is the mere phraseology of custom. It is composed of men; and whoever the men be to whom the Government of any country is entrusted, they ought to be the best

and wisest that can be found, and if they are not so, they are not fit for the station. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him King, or calling him Lord, than I should do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to **Guelph**. I should **not** be a whit the **more** able to write a book, because my name were altered; neither would any man, now called a King or a Lord, have a whit the more sense than he now has, were he to call himself Thomas Paine.

As to the word "Commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be abolished. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point.—Let us suppose that Government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of government, offered to the nation for its approbation or rejection, consisted of the following parts:

First—That some one individual should be taken from all the rest of the nation, and to whom all the rest should swear obedience, and never be permitted to sit down in his presence, and that they should give him one million sterling a year.—That the nation should never after have power or authority to make laws but with his express consent, and that his sons and his sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should have the same power, and also the same money annually paid to them for ever.

Secondly.—That there should be two houses of Legislators to assist in making laws, one of which should, in the first instance, be entirely appointed by the aforesaid person, and that their sons and their sons' sons, whe-

ther wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should for ever after be hereditary Legislators.

Thirdly — That the other house should be chosen in the same manner as the house, now called the House of Commons, is chosen, and should be subject to the controul of the two aforesaid hereditary Powers in all things.

It would be impossible to cram such a farrago of imposition and absurdity down the throat of this or any other nation, that were capable of reasoning upon its rights and its interest.

They would ask, in the first place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, such irrational and preposterous distinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretensions any man could have, or what services he could render, to entitle him to a million a year? They would go farther, and revolt at the idea of consigning their children and their children's children, to the domination of persons hereafter to be born, who might, for any thing they could foresee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally discover, that the project of hereditary Governors and Legislators *was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity*. Not only the calm dictates of reason, and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride, would impel men to spurn such proposals.

From the grosser absurdities of such a scheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects — They would soon see that it would end in tyranny accomplished by fraud. That in the operation of it, it would be two to one against them, because the two parts that were to be made hereditary, would form a common interest, and stick to each other; and

that themselves and representatives would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other parts of the Government. — Yet call one of those powers King, the other Lords, and the third, the Commons, and it gives the model of what is called the English Government.

I have asserted, and have shewn, both in the First and Second Parts of *Rights of Man*, that there is not such a thing as an English Constitution, and that the people have yet a Constitution to form. *A Constitution is a thing antecedent to a Government; it is the act of the people creating a Government and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exercise of the powers so given.* But whenever did the people of England, acting in their original constituent character, by a delegation elected for that express purpose, declare and say, “*We, the people of this land, do constitute and appoint this to be our system and form of Government?*” The Government has assumed to constitute itself, but it never was constituted by the people, in whom alone the right of constituting resides.

I will here recite the preamble to the Federal Constitution of the United States of America. I have shewn in the Second Part of *Rights of Man*, the manner by which the Constitution was formed and afterwards ratified; and to which I refer the reader. — The preamble is in the following words:

“WE, THE PEOPLE of the
“ United States, in order to form
“ a more perfect union, establish
“ justice, insure domestic tran-
“ quillity, provide for common
“ defence, promote the general
“ welfare, and secure the bles-
“ sings of liberty to ourselves

“ and our posterity, DO ORDAIN
 “ AND ESTABLISH THIS CON-
 “ STITUTION for the United
 “ States of America.”

Then follow the several articles which appoint the manner in which the several component parts of the Government, legislative and executive, shall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they shall have: also, the manner by which future additions, alterations, or amendments, shall be made to the Constitution. Consequently, every improvement that can be made in the science of Government, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in Governments founded on assumption and false principles, that reasoning upon, and investigating systems and principles of Government, and shewing their several excellencies and defects, are termed libellous and seditious. These terms were made part of the charge brought against Locke, Hampden, and Sydney, and will continue to be brought against all good men, so long as bad government shall continue.

The Government of this country has been ostentatiously giving challenges for more than an hundred years past, upon what it called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a King's Speech, or a parliamentary Speech, has been uttered, in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been insulted with their challenges. But it now appears that all this was vapour and vain-boasting, or that it was intended to conceal abuses and defects, and hush the people into taxes. I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public have shewn, in a fair, open, and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the system;

when, lo! those champions of the Civil List have fled away, and sent the Attorney-General to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their Places and Pensions by a prosecution.

I will here drop this part of the subject, and state a few particulars respecting the prosecution now pending, by which the Addressers will see that they have been used as tools to the prosecuting party and their dependents. The case is as follows:

The original edition of the First and Second Parts of RIGHTS OF MAN, having been expensively printed (in the modern stile of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution,) the high price precluded the generality of people from purchasing; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requested leave to print two thousand copies for themselves, with which request I immediately complied. The same request came to me from Rotherham, from Leicester, from Chester, from several towns in Scotland; and Mr. James Mackintosh, Author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, brought me a request from Warwickshire, for leave to print ten thousand copies in that country. I had already sent a cheap edition to Scotland; and finding the applications increase, I concluded that the best method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by printing small editions in the country of only a few thousands each.

The cheap edition of the First Part was begun about the middle of last April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a prosecution, and the event has proved that I was not mistaken. I had then occasion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker, of Manchester, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpose of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the consequence; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extensive circulation, the Government-party, not able to controvert the plans, arguments, and principles it contained, had chosen to remain silent; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the mass of the nation, and especially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretence of prosecuting either the Author or the Publisher, or both. They chose to begin with the Publisher.

Nearly a month, however, passed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town; (May 14) and went to Mr. Jordan, the publisher of the original edition. He had that evening been served with a summons, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the Monday following, but for what purpose was not stated. Supposing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expence of the defence on myself. But finding afterwards that he absented himself from the attorney employed, and had engaged another, and that he had been closeted with the Solicitors of the Treasury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he chose

to plead Guilty. This he might do if he pleased; and I make no objection against him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *Guilty* was no other than declaring himself to be the publisher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work; for were it to be construed otherwise, it would amount to the absurdity of converting a publisher into a Jury, and his confession into a verdict upon the work itself. This would be the highest possible refinement upon packing of Juries.

On the 21st of May, they commenced their prosecution against me, as the Author, by leaving a summons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the 8th of June following; and on the same day, (May 21) *they issued also their Proclamation*. Thus the Court of St. James's, and the Court of King's Bench, were playing into each other's hands at the same instant of time, and the farce of Addressee brought up the rear; and this mode of proceeding is called by the prostituted name of Law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a ministerial dormancy of almost eighteen months, can be attributed to no other cause than their having gained information of the forwardness of the cheap Edition, and the dread they felt at the progressive increase of political knowledge.

I was strongly advised by several gentlemen, as well those in the practice of the Law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment against the publisher of the Proclamation, as a publication tending to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a Jury on the issue of a matter then pending; but it appeared to me much better to avail myself of the opportunity which such a precedent justified me in using, by

meeting the Proclamation and the Addressees on their own ground, and publicly defending the Work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced.—And conscious as I now am, that the Work entitled RIGHTS OF MAN, so far from being, as has been maliciously or erroneously represented, a false, wicked, and seditious Libel, is a work abounding with unanswerable truths, with principles of the purest morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted—Conscious, I say, of these things, and having no object in view but the happiness of mankind, I have now put the matter to the best proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the First and Second Parts of that Work. Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits or demerits of the Work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interest and happiness.

If, to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavour to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote universal peace, civilization, and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a Libeller, and let the name of LIBELLER be engraven on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill-judged measures which fear, ignorance, or arrogance, could suggest, the Proclamation, and the project for Addressees, are two of the worst. They served to

advertise the work which the promoters of those measures wished to keep unknown; and in doing this, they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbade them to know, and they put the strength of their party to that hazardous issue that prudence would have avoided.—The County Meeting for Middlesex was attended by only one hundred and eighteen Addressees. They, no doubt, expected, that thousands would flock to their standard, and clamour against the *Rights of Man*. But the case most probably is, that men, in all countries, are not so blind to their Rights and their Interest, as Governments believe.

Having thus shewn the extraordinary manner in which the Government-party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few observations on the prosecution, and on the mode of trial by Special Jury.

In the first place, I have written a book; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not consider the prosecution as particularly levelled against me, but against the general right, or the right of every man, of investigating systems and principles of Government, and shewing their several excellencies or defects. If the press be free only to flatter Government, as Mr. Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain Court sycophants are pleased to call a “glorious Constitution,” and not free to examine into its errors or abuses, or whether a Constitution really exist or not, such freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey, or Russia; and a Jury, in this case, would not be a Jury to try, but an Inquisition to condemn.

I have asserted, and by fair open argument maintained, the right of eve-

ry nation at all times, to establish such a system and form of Government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness; and to change, or alter it, as it sees occasion. Will any Jury deny to the Nation this right? If they do, they are traitors, and their Verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means must be admitted also; for it would be the highest absurdity to say, that the right existed, but the means did not. The question, then, is, What are the means by which the possession and exercise of this National Right are to be secured? The answer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the right of free investigation; for investigation always serves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the best, but the true system of Government, which is the representative system, and I have given reasons for that opinion.

First, Because, in the representative system, no office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual; and consequently, there is nothing to excite those national contentions and civil wars, with which countries under monarchical governments, are frequently convulsed, and of which the History of England exhibits such numerous instances.

Secondly, Because the representative is a system of Government always in maturity; whereas monarchical government fluctuates through all the stages, from non-age to dotage.

Thirdly, Because the representative system admits of none but men, properly qualified, into the Govern-

ment, or removes them if they prove to be otherwise. Whereas, in the hereditary system, a nation may be encumbered with a knave or an idiot, for a whole life-time, and not be benefited by a successor.

Fourthly, Because there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government, or in other words, hereditary successors, because hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have always the same right to establish government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them; and, therefore, all laws attempting to establish hereditary government, are founded on assumption and political fiction.

If these positions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppression, and political superstition, which are the objects I have in view, in publishing them, that Jury would commit an act of injustice to their country, and to me, if not an act of perjury, that should call them *false, wicked, and malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his Treatise, "on Virtues and Rewards," has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country in the world—"The science, (says he,) of the politician, consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of *individual happiness* with the least *national expence*."

But if Juries are to be made use of to prohibit enquiry, to suppress truth, and to stop the progress of knowledge,

this boasted palladium of liberty becomes the most successful instrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practised at the Bar, and from the Bench, to impose upon the understanding of a Jury, and obtain a Verdict where the consciences of men could not otherwise consent, one of the most successful has been that of calling *truth* a *libel*, and of insinuating, that the words, "*false-ly, wickedly, and maliciously,*" though they are made the formidable and high sounding part of the charge, are not matters for consideration with a Jury. For what purpose, then, are they retained, unless it be for that of imposition and wilful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable insult upon morality and upon human understanding, than to see a man sitting in the judgment seat, affecting, by an antiquated foppery of dress, to impress the audience with awe; then causing witnesses and Jury to be sworn to truth and justice, himself having officially sworn the same; then causing to be read a prosecution against a man, charging him with having *wickedly and maliciously written and published a certain false, wicked, and seditious book*; and having gone through all this with a shew of solemnity, as if he saw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn, in an instant, the whole into a farce, and, in order to obtain a verdict that could not otherwise be obtained, tell the Jury that the charge of *falsely, wickedly, and seditiously*, meant nothing; that *truth* was out of the question; and that whether the person accused spoke truth or falsehood, or intended *virtuously or wickedly*, was the same

thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquisitorial scene, by stating some antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting, or giving some opinion of his own, and *falsely calling the one and the other—Law*. It was, most probably, to such a Judge as this, that the most solemn of all reproofs was given—*"The Lord will smite thee, thou whitened wall."*

I now proceed to offer some remarks on what is called a Special Jury.—As to what is called a Special Verdict, I shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the Jury to delegate, or of the Bench to obtain, the exercise of that right which is committed to the Jury only.

With respect to Special Juries, I shall state such matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the first place, this mode of trial is but of modern invention, and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when disputes arose between Merchants, and were brought before a Court, the case was, that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping Merchants accounts, not being sufficiently understood by persons out of their own line, it became necessary to depart from the common mode of appointing Juries whose *practical knowledge* would enable them to decide upon the case. From this introduction, Special Juries became more general; but some doubts having arisen as to their legality, an act was passed in the 3d of Geo. II. to establish them as legal, and also to

extend them to all cases, not only between individuals, but in cases where *the Government itself should be the Prosecutor*. This most probably gave rise to the suspicion so generally entertained of packing a Jury; because, by this act, when the Crown, as it is called, is the Prosecutor, the Master of the Crown-office, who holds his office under the Crown, is the person who either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the Jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the prosecuting party selecting a Jury.

The process is as follows :

On motion being made in Court, by either the Plaintiff or Defendant, for a Special Jury, the Court grants it or not, at its own discretion.

If it be granted, the Solicitor of the party that applied for the Special Jury gives notice to the Solicitor of the adverse party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the Master of the Crown-office. The Master of the Crown-office sends to the Sheriff or his deputy, who attends with the Sheriff's book of Freeholders. From this book, forty-eight names are *taken*, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and on a future day notice is again given, and the Solicitors meet a second time, and each strikes out twelve names. The list being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the first twelve that appear in Court, and answer to their names, is the Special Jury for that cause. The first operation, that of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the Jury; and the reducing them to twenty-four is called striking the Jury.

Having thus stated the general process, I come to particulars, and the first question will be, how are the forty-eight names, out of which the Jury is to be struck, obtained from the Sheriff's book? for herein lies the principal ground of suspicion, with respect to what is understood by packing of Juries.

Either they must be taken by some rule agreed upon between the parties, or by some common rule known and established before-hand, or at the discretion of some person, who, in such a case, ought to be perfectly disinterested in the issue, as well officially as otherwise.

In the case of Merchants, and in all cases between individuals, the Master of the office, called the Crown-office, is officially an indifferent person, and as such may be a proper person to act between the parties, and present them with a list of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to strike twelve. But the case assumes an entire different character when the Government itself is the Prosecutor. The master of the Crown-office is then an officer holding his office under the Prosecutor; and it is therefore no wonder that the suspicion of packing Juries should, in such cases, have been so prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the prosecution is commenced against the Author or Publisher of such Works as treat of reforms, and of the abolition of superfluous places and offices, &c. because in such cases every person holding an office, subject to that suspicion, becomes interested as a party; and the office, called the Crown-office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this description.

I have heard it asserted, that the Master of the Crown office is to open the Sheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take thereout forty-eight *following* names, to which the word Merchant or Esquire is affixed. The former of these are certainly proper, when the case is between Merchants, and it has reference to the origin of the custom, and to nothing else. As to the word Esquire, every man is an Esquire who pleases to call himself Esquire; and the sensible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for enquiry is, whether there be any existing law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names shall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of custom which the office has created; or whether the selection of the forty-eight be wholly at the discretion and choice of the Master of the Crown-office? One or other of the two latter appears to be the case, because the act already mentioned, of the 3d of Geo. II. lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law—but says only, that Special Juries shall hereafter be struck, “*in such manner as Special Juries have been and are usually struck.*”

This act appears to me to have been what is generally understood by a “*deep take in.*” It was fitted to the spur of the moment in which it was passed, 3d of Geo. II. when parties ran high, and it served to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then Minister, the management of Juries in Crown prosecutions, by making the nomination of the forty-eight persons, from whom the Jury was to be struck, follow the precedent established by custom between individuals, and by this means it slipped into practice with less suspicion. Now, the manner of

obtaining Special Juries through the medium of an officer of the Government, such for instance as a Master of the Crown office, may be impartial in the case of Merchants, or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper and suspicious in cases where the Government itself is one of the parties. And it must, upon the whole, appear a strange inconsistency, that a Government should keep one officer to nominate the forty-eight persons from whom the Jury is to be struck, both of whom are *officers of the Civil List*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious Right of trial by Jury!*

In the case of the King against Jordan, for publishing RIGHTS OF MAN, the Attorney-General moved for the appointment of a Special Jury, and the Master of the Crown-office nominated the forty-eight persons himself, and took them from such part of the Sheriff's book as he pleased. The trial did not come on, occasioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea; but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of discussing the subject of Special Juries; for though such discussion might have had no effect in the Court of King's-Bench, it would, in the present disposition for enquiry, have had a considerable effect upon the Country; and in all national reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a Country right, and it will soon put Government right. Among the improper things acted by the Government in the case of Special Juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the Jury with a dinner, and afterwards giving each Jurymen two guineas, if a verdict be found for the prosecution, and only one if otherwise; and it has been long

observed, that in London and Westminster there are persons who appear to make a trade of serving, by being so frequently seen upon Special Juries.

Thus much for Special Juries. As to what is called a *Common Jury*, upon any Government prosecution against the Author or Publisher of *RIGHTS OF MAN*, during the time of the *present Sheriffry*, I have one question to offer, which is, *whether the present Sheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the case, by the part they have taken in procuring an Address from the county of Middlesex, (however diminutive and insignificant the number of Addressers were, being only one hundred and eighteen) are eligible or proper persons to be entrusted with the power of returning a Jury to try the issue of any such prosecution?*

But the whole matter appears, at least to me, to be worthy of a more extensive consideration than what relates to any Jury, whether Special or Common; for the case is, whether any part of a whole nation, locally selected as a Jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole nation, on any matter that relates to systems and principles of Government, and whether it be not applying the institution of Juries to purposes for which such institution was not intended? For example,

I have asserted, in the Work *RIGHTS OF MAN*, that as every man in the nation pays taxes, so has every man a right to a share in government, and consequently that the people of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Hallifax, &c. &c. have the same right as those of London. Shall then twelve men, picked out between Temple-bar and Whitechapel, because the book happened to be first published there,

decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of those towns, or of any other town or village in the nation?

Having thus spoken of Juries, I come next to offer a few observations on the matter contained in the information or prosecution.

The work, *RIGHTS OF MAN*, consists of Part the First, and Part the Second. The First Part the prosecutor has thought it most proper to let alone; and from the Second Part he has selected a few short paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the same printing as in the cheap edition. Those paragraphs relate chiefly to certain facts, such as the Revolution of 1688, and the coming of George the First, commonly called of the House of Hanover, or the House of Brunswick, or some such house. The arguments, plans, and principles, contained in the work, the prosecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The Act which the prosecutor appears to rest most upon for the support of the prosecution, is the Act intitled, "An Act, declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and settling the succession of the crown," passed in the first year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "Bill of Rights."

I have called this Bill "*A Bill of wrongs and of insult.*" My reasons, and also my proofs, are as follow:

The method and principle which this Bill takes for declaring rights and liberties, are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties; it is an assumed attempt to take them wholly away from posterity—for the declaration in the said Bill is as follows:

“ The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do in *the name of all the people*, most humbly and faithfully *submit themselves, their heirs, and posterity for ever* ;” that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and successors. This is a strange way of declaring rights and liberties. But the Parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part, of the people, had no authority from them for so doing—and with respect to *posterity for ever*, they had no right or authority whatever in the case. It was assumption and usurpation. I have reasoned very extensively against the principle of this Bill in the first part of Rights of Man ; the prosecutor has silently admitted that reasoning, and he now commences a prosecution on the authority of the Bill, after admitting the reasoning against it.

It is also to be observed, that the declaration in this Bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than against the family of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exist, that in the space of an hundred years, posterity might discover a different and much better system of government, and that every species of hereditary government might fall as Popes and Monks had fallen before. This, I say, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the Bill, in the present case, is a new, erroneous, and illegal application, and is the same as creating a new Bill *ex post facto*.

It has ever been the craft of Courtiers, for the purpose of keeping up an expensive and enormous Civil List, and a mummary of useless and antiquated places and offices at the public expence, to be continually hang-

ing England upon some individual or other, called *King*, though the man might not have capacity to be a parish constable. The folly and absurdity of this is appearing more and more every day ; and still those men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonsense, and suppose the whole nation talks the same Gibberish.

Let such men cry up the House of Orange, or the House of Brunswick, if they please. They would cry up any other house if it suited their purpose, and give as good reasons for it. But what is this house, or that house, or any house to a nation ? “ *For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*” Her freedom depends wholly upon herself, and not on any house, nor on any individual. I ask not in what light this cargo of foreign houses appears to others—but I will say in what light it appears to me.—It was like the trees of the forest saying unto the bramble, come thou and reign over us.

Thus much for both their houses. I now come to speak of two other houses, which are also put into the information, and those are, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Here, I suppose, the Attorney-General intends to prove me guilty of speaking either truth or falsehood ; for, according to the modern interpretation of Libels, it does not signify which, and the only improvement necessary to shew the complete absurdity of such doctrine, would be, to prosecute a man for uttering a most *false and wicked truth*.

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the Office Copy, with the Attorney General's innuendoes, enclosed in parentheses as they stand in the information, and I hope that civil

list officer will caution the Court not to laugh when he reads them, and also to take care not to laugh himself.

The information states, that *Thomas Paine being a wicked, malicious, seditious, and evil-disposed person, hath, with force and arms, and most wicked cunning, written and published a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and seditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to say—*

“ With respect to the two Houses,
 “ of which the English Parliament
 “ (*meaning the parliament of this King-*
 “ *dom*) is composed, they appear to be
 “ effectually influenced into one, and,
 “ as a Legislature, to have no tem-
 “ per of its own. The Minister,
 “ (*meaning the Minister employed by the*
 “ *King of this Realm, in the adminis-*
 “ *tration of the Government thereof*)
 “ whoever he, at any time may be,
 “ touches IT, [*meaning the two Houses*
 “ *of Parliament of this Kingdom*) as
 “ with an opium wand, and IT
 “ (*meaning the two Houses of Parlia-*
 “ *ment of this Kingdom*) sleeps obedi-
 “ ence.”—As I am not malicious
 enough to disturb their repose, though
 it be time they should awake, I leave
 the two Houses, and the Attorney
 General, to the enjoyment of their
 dreams, and proceed to a new subject.

The Gentlemen, to whom I shall next address myself, are those who have stiled themselves “*Friends of the people,*” holding their meeting at the Freemasons’ Tavern, London.

One of the principal Members of this Society, is Mr. Grey, who, I believe, is also one of the most independent Members in Parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of

my own. The occasion was as follows :

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound ; and the day after the King’s Message, as it is called, was sent to Parliament, I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French Revolution should not be a subject (for he was then writing the book I have since answered) I would call on him the next day, and mention some matters I was acquainted with, respecting the affair ; for it appeared to me extraordinary, that any body of men, calling themselves Representatives, should commit themselves so precipitately, or, “ sleep obedience,” as Parliament was then doing, and run a nation into expence, and, perhaps a war, without so much as enquiring into the case, or the subject, of both which I had some knowledge.

When I saw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumstances to him, he particularly spoke of Mr. Grey, as the fittest Member to bring such matters forward ; for, said Mr. Burke, “ *I am not the proper person to do it,* “ as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt “ about Mr. Hastings’s trial.” I hope the Attorney General will allow, that Mr. Burke was then *sleeping his obedience.*—But to return to the Society—

I cannot bring myself to believe, that the general motive of this Society is any thing more than that by which every former parliamentary opposition has been governed, and by which the present is sufficiently known. Failing in their present pursuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that not in a very mannerly manner) endeavoured to possess themselves of that ground out of doors, which,

had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candour, the progress of a certain publication, and when they saw it had excited a spirit of enquiry, and was rapidly spreading, they stepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a Libel. In saying this, he libelled himself. Politicians of this cast, such, I mean, as those who trim between parties, and lye by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarrass business, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themselves generally is, that they go just far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declarations of this Society, of the 25th of April, and 5th of May, will find a studied reserve upon all the points that are real abuses. They speak not once of the extravagance of Government, of the abominable list of unnecessary and sinecure places and pensions, of the enormity of the Civil List, of the excess of taxes, nor of any one matter that substantially affects the nation; and from some conversation that has passed in that Society, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan, to carry this class of reforms into practice. No Opposition Party ever did, when it gained possession.

In making these free observations, I mean not to enter into contention with this Society, their incivility towards me is what I should expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wish that

every individual among them may act in the same upright, uninfluenced, and public spirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others, and not of me. I have no other interest in the cause than the interest of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party; and when I quit, it shall be as honourably as I began.

I consider the reform of Parliament, by an application to Parliament, as proposed by the Society, to be a worn-out hackney subject, about which the nation is tired, and the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a subject that is cognizable before Parliament, because no Government has a right to alter itself, either in whole or in part. The right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the nation only, and the proper mean is by a national convention, elected for the purpose, by all the people. By this, the will of the nation, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Partial addresses, or separate associations, are not testimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain that the opinions of men, with respect to systems and principles of government, are changing fast in all countries. The alteration in England, within the space of little more than a year, is far greater than could then have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increasing. It moves along the country with the silence of thought. The enormous expence of Government has provoked men to think, by making them feel; and the Proclamation has

served to encrease jealousy and disgust. To prevent, therefore, those commotions which too often and too suddenly arise from suffocated discontents, it is best that the general WILL should have the full and free opportunity of being publicly ascertained and known.

Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is every day becoming worse, because the unrepresented parts of the nation are increasing in population and property, and the represented parts are decreasing. It is, therefore, no ill-grounded estimation to say, that as not one person in seven is represented, at least fourteen millions of taxes, out of the seventeen millions, are paid by the unrepresented part; for although copyholds and leaseholds are assessed to the land tax, the holders are unrepresented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being represented, it is not the Representatives of rotten Boroughs, nor Special Juries, that can decide the question. This is one of the possible cases that ought to be foreseen, in order to prevent the inconveniences that might arise to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confess I have no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the rights of people are, they have a right to them, and none have a right either to withhold them, or to grant them. Government ought to be established on such principles of justice as to exclude the occasion of all such applications, for wherever they appear they are virtually accusations.

I wish that Mr. Grey, since he has embarked in the business, would take the whole of it into consideration. He will then see that the right of re-

forming the state of the Representation does not reside in Parliament, and that the only motion he could consistently make, would be, that Parliament should *recommend* the election of a convention by all the people, because all pay taxes. But whether Parliament recommended it or not, the right of the nation would neither be lessened nor increased thereby.

As to Petitions from the unrepresented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Manchester, Sheffield, &c. should petition the rotten Boroughs, as that they should petition the Representatives of those Boroughs. Those two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten Boroughs put together, and it is scarcely to be expected they should pay their court either to the Boroughs, or the Borough-mongers.

It ought also to be observed, that what it called Parliament, is composed of two houses that have always declared against the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumstances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore, in the representation cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the subject of an act of Parliament, because such a mode would include the interference, against which the Commons on their part have protested; but must, as well on the ground of formality, as on that of right, proceed from a National Convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, sit down and endeavour to put his thoughts together, for the purpose of drawing up an application to Parliament for a reform of Parliament, and he will soon convince himself of the

folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on; that he cannot make his thoughts join, so as to produce any effect; for whatever formality of words he may use, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly opposed to each other; the one in setting forth the reasons, the other in praying for the relief, and the two, when placed together, would stand thus:—" *The Representation in Parliament is so very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and therefore, confiding in the justice and wisdom of Parliament, we pray,*" &c. &c.

The heavy manner in which every former proposed application to Parliament has dragged, sufficiently shews, that though the nation might not exactly see the awkwardness of the measure, it could not clearly see its way by that mean. To this also may be added another remark, which is, that the worse Parliament is, the less will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the strongest censures the public express. It is as if they were to say, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the Court-Kalendar of Place-men in both Houses, and the manner in which the Civil List operates, and he will be at no loss to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one side, nor of the opposition to reforms on the other.

Besides the numerous list of paid persons exhibited in the Court-Kalendar, which so indecently stares the nation in the face, there is an unknown number of masked Pensioners, which renders Parliament still more suspected.

Who would have supposed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly

did against secret influence, and corrupt majorities, should become a concealed Pensioner? I will now state the case, not for the little purpose of exposing Mr. Burke, but to shew the inconsistency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the nation can at present know, may be in the same case with himself.

Towards the end of Lord North's administration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into Parliament, generally known by the name of Mr. Burke's Reform Bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no pension, exceeding the sum of three hundred pounds a year, shall be granted to any one person, and that the whole amount of the pensions granted in one year shall not exceed six hundred pounds; a list of which, together with the *names of the persons* to whom the same are granted, shall be laid before Parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each session, until the whole pension list shall be reduced to ninety thousand pounds." A provisory clause is afterwards added, "That it shall be lawful for the First Commissioner of the Treasury, to return into the Exchequer, any pension or annuity, *without a name* on his making oath that such pension or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, use, or behoof, of any Member of the House of Commons."

But soon after that administration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with came into power, it appears, from the circumstances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became himself a Pensioner in disguise; in a similar manner, as if a pension had been

granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original transaction: but after the Pension was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the most of it at once, by felling or mortgaging it; and the gentleman, in whose name the pension stands, applied to one of the public offices for that purpose. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund Burke*, as the real Pensioner of 1,500*l.* per annum. When men trumpet forth what they call the blessings of the Constitution, it ought to be known what sort of blessings they allude to.

As to the Civil List, of a million a year, it is not to be supposed that any one man can eat, drink, or consume the whole upon himself. The case is, that above half this sum is annually apportioned among Courtiers, and Court Members, of both Houses, in places and offices, altogether insignificant and perfectly useless, as to every purpose of civil, rational, and manly government. For instance,

Of what use in the science and system of Government is what is called a Lord Chamberlain, a Master and a Mistress of the Robes, a Master of the Horse, a Master of the Hawks, and an hundred other such things? Laws derive no additional force, nor additional excellence, from such mum-
mery.

In the disbursements of the Civil List for the year 1786 (which may be seen in Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue) are four separate charges for this mummery office of Chamberlain.

1st	-	£.38,778	17	—
2d	-	3,000	—	—
3d	-	24,069	19	—
4th	-	10,000	18	3
		75,849	14	3

besides £.1,119 charged for Alms.

From this sample, the rest may be guessed at. As to the Master of the Hawks, (there are no hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reason the people should pay the expence of feeding them, many of whom are put to it to get bread for their children) his salary is 1,372*l.* 10*s.*

And besides a list of items of this kind, sufficient to fill a quire of paper, the Pension lists alone are 107,404*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* which is a greater sum than all the expences of the federal Government in America amount to.

Among the items, there are two I had no expectations of finding, and which, in this day of enquiry after Civil List influence, ought to be exposed. The one is an annual payment of one thousand seven hundred pounds to the Dissenting Ministers in England, and eight hundred pounds to those of Ireland.

This is the fact; and the distribution, *as I am informed*, is as follows: The whole sum of £.1,700 is paid to one person, a Dissenting Minister in London, who divides it among eight others, and those eight among such others as they please. The Lay-body of the Dissenters, and many of their principal Ministers, have long considered it as dishonourable, and have endeavoured to prevent it, but still it continues to be secretly paid; and as the world has sometimes seen very fulsome Addresses from parts of that body, it may naturally be supposed

that the receivers, like Bishops and other Court-Clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is distributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the secret history of the Civil List is not the intention of this publication. It is sufficient in this place, to expose its general character, and the mass of influence it keeps alive. It will necessarily become one of the objects of reform; and therefore enough is said to shew, that under its operation, no application to Parliament can be expected to succeed, nor can consistently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the Party that is in possession of those places, nor by the Opposition who are waiting for them; and as to a *mere reform* in the state of the Representation, under the idea that another Parliament, differently elected to the present, but still a component third part of the same system, and subject to the controul of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require a reform accomplishable by a mere reform in the state of the Representation, the persons who compose the present Parliament might, with rather more propriety be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the mere instruments of doing it by a future Parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the nation must, of necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavoured to shew what the abject condition of Parliament is, and the impropriety of going a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be, in the constitution of every country, a mode of referring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the nation itself. The right of altering any part of a Government cannot, as already observed, reside in the Government, or that Government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a nation may feel inconveniencies, either in the excess of taxation, or in the mode of expenditure, or in any thing else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on enquiry be found to be in another; or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed Governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of first obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and every thing short of this is guess-work or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to Parliament can bring forward this knowledge. That body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The enquiry, therefore, which is of necessity the first

step in the business, cannot be trusted to Parliament, but must be undertaken by a distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten Boroughs and absurd Corporations for Addressees, or hawking them about the country to be signed by a few dependant tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to the point, and to ascertain the sense of the nation by electing a National Convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be enquired into; and no Minister, nor any other person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they are expended. The concealed Pensioners will then be obliged to unmask; and the source of influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this public and national ground, all objections against par-
tial Addressees on one side, or private associations on the other, will be done away, THE NATION WILL DECREE ITS OWN REFORMS; and the clamour about Party and Faction, or Ins or Outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a Convention is easy in practice.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be

sufficiently enough known, from the number of houses assessed to the House and Window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of Members to be elected to the National Convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions, and the total number of Members to be elected to the Convention be one thousand, the number of Members to be elected in a county containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants will be *twenty-one*, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a Convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the nation, go on grounds different from that of Parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he lives in a city, a town, or a village. The custom of attaching Rights to *place*, or in other words to inanimate matter, instead of to the *person*, independently of place, is too absurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the nation of the age of twenty-one years pays taxes, either out of the property he possesses, or out of the product of his labour, which is property to him; and is amenable in his own person to every law of the land; so has every one the same equal right to vote, and no one part of a nation, nor any individual, has a right to dispute the right of another. The man who should do this ought to forfeit the exercise of his *own* right, for a term of years. This would render the punishment consistent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmest possible ground, because the qualification is such as nothing but dying before the time can take away ; and the equality of Rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exercise. But when Rights are placed upon, or made dependant upon property, they are on the most precarious of all tenures. " Riches make themselves wings, " and fly away," and the rights fly with them ; and thus they become lost to the man when they would be of most value.

It is from a strange mixture of tyranny and cowardice, that exclusions have been set up and continued. The boldness to do wrong at first, changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at last into fear. The Representatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, lest it should awaken the nation to a sense of all the wrongs it has endured. This case serves to shew that the same conduct that best constitutes the safety of an individual, namely, a strict adherence to principle, constitutes also the safety of a Government, and that without it safety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property ; for the rights of the one are as much property to him as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*. It is only by setting out on just principles that men are trained to be just to each other ; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But

the guarantee, to be effectual, must be parliamenterarily reciprocal.

Exclusions are not only unjust, but they frequently operate as injuriously to the party who monopolizes, as to those who are excluded. When men seek to exclude others from participating in the exercise of any right, they should, at least, be assured that they can effectually perform the whole of the business they undertake ; for unless they do this, themselves will be losers by the monopoly. This has been the case with respect to the monopolized right of Election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the Parliamentary Representation, to whom the power of taxation was entrusted, in the state it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themselves equally with those who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be said, about disqualifications, arising from the commission of offences ; but were this subject urged to its full extent, it would disqualify a great number of the present Electors, together with their Representatives ; for, of all offences, none are more destructive to the morals of Society than Bribery and Corruption. It is, therefore, civility to such persons to pass this subject over, and to give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Every thing, in the present mode of electioneering in England, is the reverse of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural consequence of inverting the order of the system.

In the first place, the Candidate seeks the Elector, instead of the Elector seeking for a Representative ; and

the Electors are advertized as being in the interest of the Candidate, instead of the Candidate being in the interest of the Electors. The Candidate pays the Elector for his vote, instead of the Nation paying the Representative for his time and attendance on public business. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the Candidate, as if he, and not the Electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himself at any period of the election, to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right, and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the last Westminster election between two of the Candidates, (Mr. Fox and Lord Hood) was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The Candidates assumed, in their own persons, the rights of the Electors; for it was only in the body of the Electors, and not at all in the Candidates, that the right of making any such compact or compromise could exist. But the principle of Election and Representation is so completely done away, in every stage thereof, that inconsistency has no longer the power of surprising.

Neither from elections thus conducted, nor from rotten Borough Addressers, nor from County-meetings, promoted by Placemen and Pensioners, can the sense of the nation be known. It is still corruption appealing to itself. But a Convention of a thousand persons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided issue.

As to County-meetings, it is only persons of leisure, or those who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on such occasions is but like a drop in the bucket compared with the whole. The only consistent service which such meetings

could render, would be that of apportioning the county into convenient districts; and when this is done, each district might, according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of County Members to the National Convention; and the vote of each Elector might be taken in the parish where he resided, either by ballot or by voice, as he should chuse to give it.

A National Convention thus formed would bring together the sense and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The science of Government, and the interest of the Public, and of the several parts thereof, would then undergo an ample and rational discussion, freed from the language of parliamentary disguise.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reason with, and endeavour to convince each other, upon any matter that respects their common good, yet, in point of practice, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew, (for every concealed Pensioner has the opportunity of knowing) that the abuses acted under the present system, are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever such abuses should be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavoured to preclude the event, by sturdily denying the right of a majority of a nation to act as a whole. Let us bestow a thought upon this case.

When any matter is proposed as a subject for consultation, it necessarily implies some mode of decision. Common consent, arising from absolute necessity, has placed this in a majority

of opinions; because without it there can be no decision, and consequently no order. It is, perhaps, the only case in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can consistently be unanimous; because it is a mode of decision derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned; *that* right being first individually exercised in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion shall arrange with the minority or the majority, is a subsequent accidental thing that neither increases nor diminishes the individual original right itself. Prior to any debate, enquiry or investigation, it is not supposed to be known on which side the majority of opinions will fall, and therefore whilst this mode of decision secures to every one the right of giving an opinion, it admits to every one an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will present themselves to the consideration of a National Convention, there is one, wholly of a domestic nature, but so marvellously loaded with confusion, as to appear at first sight, almost impossible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called Law.

But, if we examine into the cause from whence this confusion, now so much the subject of universal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately present itself, but with it, the means of preventing the like case hereafter.

In the first place, the confusion has generated itself from the absurdity of every Parliament assuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in

a similar manner of this assumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration; and, however absurd in principle, or inconsistent in practice many of them have become, they still are, if not especially repealed, considered as making a part of the general mass. By this means the body of what is called Law, is spread over a space of *several hundred years*, comprehending laws obsolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws forgotten or remembered; and what renders the case still worse is, that the confusion multiplies with the progress of time.*

To bring this mishapen monster into form, and to prevent its lapsing again into a wilderness state, only two things, and those very simple are necessary.

The first is, to review the whole mass of laws, and to bring forward such only as are worth retaining, and let all the rest drop; and to give to the laws so brought forward a new era commencing from the time of such reform.

Secondly, that at the expiration of every twenty-one years, (or any other stated period) a like review shall again be taken, and the laws found proper to be retained, be again carried forward, commencing with that date, and the useless laws dropt and discontinued. By this means there can be no obsolete laws, and scarcely such a thing as laws standing in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every person will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

* In the time of Henry the Fourth, a law was passed, making it felony "to multiply gold or silver, or to make use of the craft or multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-five years upon the statute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.

It is worth remarking, that whilst every other branch of science is brought within some commodious system, and the study of it simplified by easy methods, the laws take the contrary course, and become every year more complicated, entangled, confused and obscure.

Among the paragraphs which the Attorney-General has taken from the *Rights of Man*, and put into his information, one is, that where I have said, "that with respect to regular law, there is *scarcely such a thing*."

As I do not know whether the Attorney-General means to shew this expression to be libellous, because it is TRUE, or because it is FALSE, I shall make no other reply to him in this place than by remarking, that if almanack-makers had not been more judicious than law-makers, the study of almanacks would by this time have become as abstruse as the study of law, and we should hear of a library of almanacks as we now do of statutes; but by the simple operation of letting the obsolete matter drop, and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is necessary to be known, is found within the space of a year, and laws also admit of being kept within some given period.

I shall here close this letter, so far as it respects the Addressees, the Proclamation, and the Prosecution; and shall offer a few observations to the Society styling itself "THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE."

That the science of government is beginning to be better understood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political superstition, and of craft and mystery is passing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be

true, as well in England, as in other countries.

As therefore it is impossible to calculate the silent progress of opinion, and also impossible to govern a nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular discontent and commotions is, to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the subject that can possibly be thrown; and, at the same time, to open the means of collecting the general sense of the nation; and this cannot, as already observed, be done by any plan so effectually as a National Convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itself by having a centre to rest upon.

The society already mentioned, (which is made up of men of various descriptions, but chiefly of those called Foxites,) appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reserve. It is now amusing the people with a new phrase, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpretation of which is, *a continuance of the abuses as long as possible. If we cannot hold all, let us hold some.*

Who are those that are frightened at reforms? Are the public afraid that their taxes should be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places and pensions should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradesman, frightened at the prospect of receiving ten pounds a year out of the surplus taxes? Is the soldier frightened at the thoughts of his discharge, and

three shillings per week during life? Is the sailor afraid that press-warrants will be abolished? The Society mistakes the fear of borough-mongers, placemen, and pensioners, for the fears of the people; and the *temperate and moderate Reform* it talks of, is calculated to suit the condition of the former.

Those words, “temperate and moderate,” are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or seduction.—A thing, moderately good, is not so good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is a species of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and

moderate Reform? The Society is the representative of nobody; neither can the unrepresented part of the nation commit this power to those in Parliament, in whose election they had no choice; and, therefore, even upon the ground the Society has taken, recourse must be had to a National Convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's proposed Motion for a Parliamentary Reform was, that it contained no plan.—It certainly did not. But the plan very easily presents itself; and whilst it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwise arise from private or popular discontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

P A I N E ' S W O R K S .

THE

A G E O F R E A S O N :

BEING AN INVESTIGATION OF

TRUE AND FABULOUS

T H E O L O G Y .

IT has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time, when the purity of the motive that induced me to it, could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of every thing appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and

false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

But lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing or in disbelieving: it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and in order to *qualify* himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive any thing more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, "*Common Sense*," in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a Revolution in the System of Government, would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place,

whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of government should be changed, those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world: but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priestcraft would be detected; and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet; as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches show certain books which they call *revelation*, or the word of God. The Jews say that their word of God was given by God to Moses face to face; the Christians say, that their word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say that their word of God [the Koran] was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuses the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some observations on the word *revelation*. Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or dispute the power of the Almighty to make such a communication if he pleases. But

admitting, for the sake of a case, that something has been revealed to a certain person and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is revelation to the first person only, and *hearsay* to every other; and consequently they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas to call any thing a revelation that comes to us at second hand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication. After this, it is only an account of something which that person says was a revelation made to him; and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent on me to believe it in the same manner, for it was not a revelation made to *me*, and I have only his word for it that it was made to *him*.

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hand of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so; and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so, the commandments carrying no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain some good moral precepts, such as any man qualified to be a law-giver or a legislator could produce himself, without having recourse to supernatural intervention.*

When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to

Mahomet by an angel, the account comes to near the same kind of hearsay evidence, and second hand authority, as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary said, or gave out, that she was with child without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband, Joseph, said, that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it: but we have not even this; for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves. It is only reported by others that *they said so*. It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not chuse to rest my belief upon such evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the son of God. He was born when the heathen mythology had still some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. Almost all the extraordinary men that lived under the heathen mythology were reputed to be the sons of some of their gods. It was not a new thing at that time to believe a man to have been celestially begotten: the intercourse of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds: the story, therefore, had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obscene: it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people

* This is, however, necessary to except the declaration, which says, that God *visits the sins of the father upon the children*. It is contrary to every principle of moral justice.

called Gentiles, or mythologists, and it was those people only that believed it. The Jews who had kept strictly to the belief of one God, and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the story.

It is curious to observe how the theory of what is called the Christian church, sprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thousand. The statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes, changed into the canonization of saints. The mythologists had gods for every thing: the Christian mythologists had saints for every thing. The church became as crowded with the one, as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue; and it yet remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here said can apply, even with the most distant disrespect, to the *real* character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind; and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek philosophers, many years before; by the quakers since; and by many good men in all ages; it has not been exceeded by any.

Jesus Christ wrote no account of himself, of his birth, parentage, or any thing else. Not a line of what is called the New Testament is of his writing. The history of him is altogether the work of other people; and as to the account given of his resurrection and ascension, it was the necessary counterpart to the story of his birth. His historians, having brought him into the world in a supernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the same manner, or the first part of the story must have fallen to the ground.

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told, exceeds every thing that went before it. The first part, that of the miraculous conception, was for a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the story, had this advantage, that though they might not be credited, they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, because it was not one of those things that admitted of proof, and it was impossible that the person of whom it was told could prove it himself.

But the resurrection of a dead person from the grave, and his ascension through the air, is a thing very different as to the evidence it admits of, to the invisible conception of a child in the womb. The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noon day, to all Jerusalem at least. A thing which every body is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal; and as the public visibility of this last related act was the only

evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground, because that evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say, they *saw it*, and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection; and, as they say, would not believe, without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I*; and the reason is equally as good for me and for every other person, as for Thomas.

It is in vain to attempt to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured, that the books in which the account is related, were written by the persons whose names they bear. The best surviving evidence we now have respecting this affair is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true*. It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is just the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you, by producing the people who say it is false.

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability.

He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man; but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests; and this brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priesthood. The accusation which those priests brought against him, was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans. Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

It is upon this plain narrative of facts, together with another case I am going to mention, that the Christian mythologists, calling themselves the Christian church, have erected their fable, which for absurdity and extravagance is not exceeded by any thing that is to be found in the mythology of the ancients.

The ancient mythologists tell that the race of giants made war against Jupiter, and that one of them threw an hundred rocks against him at one throw; that Jupiter defeated him with thunder, and confined him afterwards under Mount Etna; and that every time the Giant turns himself, Mount Etna belches fire. It is here easy to see that the circumstance of the mountain, that of its being a volcano, suggested the idea of the fable; and that the fable is made to fit and wind itself up with that circumstance.

The Christian mythologists tell that their Satan made war against the Al-

mighty, who defeated him, and confined him afterwards, not under a mountain, but in a pit. It is here easy to see that the first fable suggested the idea of the second; for the fable of Jupiter and the Giants was told many hundred years before that of Satan.

Thus far the ancient and the Christian mythologists differ very little from each other. But the latter have contrived to carry the matter much farther. They have contrived to connect the fabulous part of the story of Jesus Christ with the fable originating from Mount Etna: and in order to make all parts of the story tie together, they have taken to their aid the traditions of the Jews; for the Christian mythology is made up partly from the ancient mythology, and partly from the Jewish traditions.

The Christian mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again, to bring on the sequel of the fable. He is then introduced into the garden of Eden in the shape of a snake, or a serpent, and in that shape he enters into familiar conversation with Eve, who is no ways surprised to hear a snake talk; and the issue of this *tête-à-tête* is, that he persuades her to eat an apple, and the eating of that apple, damns all mankind.

After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the church mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit; or, if they had not done this, that they would have put a mountain upon him, (for they say that their faith can remove a mountain) or have put him *under* a mountain, as the former mythologists had done, to prevent his getting again among the women, and

doing more mischief. But instead of this, they leave him at large without even obliging him to give his parole. The secret of which is, that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. They promised him ALL the Jews, ALL the Turks by anticipation, nine-tenths of the world beside, and Mahomet into the bargain. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian mythology?

Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—given him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and man, and also the son of God, celestially begotten on purpose to be sacrificed, because, they say, that Eve, in her longing, had eaten an apple.

Putting aside every thing that might excite laughter by its absurdity, or detestation by its prophaneness, and confining ourselves merely to an examination of the parts, it is impossible to conceive a story more derogatory to the Almighty, more inconsistent with his wisdom, more contradictory to his power, than this story is.

In order to make for it a foundation to rise upon, the inventors were under the necessity of giving to the being, whom they call Satan, a power equally as great, if not greater, than they attribute to the Almighty. They have not only given him the power of liberating himself from the pit, after what they call his fall, but they have

made that power increase afterwards to infinity. Before his fall, they represent him only as an angel of limited existence, as they represent the rest. After his fall, he becomes, by their account, omnipresent. He exists every where, and at the same time. He occupies the whole immensity of space.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they represent him as defeating by stratagem, in the shape of an animal of the creation, all the power and wisdom of the Almighty. They represent him as having compelled the Almighty to the *direct necessity* either of surrendering the whole of the creation to the government and sovereignty of this Satan, or of capitulating for its redemption by coming down upon earth, and exhibiting himself upon a cross in the shape of a man.

Had the inventors of this story told it the contrary way, that is, had they represented the Almighty as compelling Satan to exhibit *himself* on a cross in the shape of a snake, as a punishment for his new transgressions, the story would have been less absurd, less contradictory. But instead of this, they make the transgressor triumph, and the Almighty fall.

That many good men have believed this strange fable and lived very good lives under that belief (for credulity is not a crime) is what I have no doubt of. In the first place, they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed any thing else in the same manner. There are also many who have been so enthusiastically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to man, in making a sacrifice of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and profaneness of the story. The more unna-

tural any thing is, the more it is capable of becoming the object of dismal admiration.

But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we are born—a world furnished to our hands that cost us nothing?—Is it we that light up the sun; that pour down the rain; and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake, the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable, that nothing can flatter it but a sacrifice of the Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it would be paying too great a compliment to their credulity to forbear it upon that account. The times and the subject demand it to be done. The suspicion that the theory of what is called the Christian church is fabulous, is becoming very extensive in all countries; and it will be a consolation to men staggering under that suspicion, and doubting what to believe, and what to disbelieve, to see the subject freely investigated. I therefore pass on to an examination of the books called the Old and the New Testament.

These books, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelations, (which by the bye is a book of riddles that requires a Revelation to explain it) are, we are told, the word of God. It is therefore proper for us to know who told us so, that we may know what credit to give to the report. The answer to this question is, that

nobody can tell, except that we tell one another so. The case, however, historically appears to be as follows :

When the church mythologists established their system, they collected all the writings they could find, and managed them as they pleased. It is a matter altogether of uncertainty to us whether such of the writings as now appear, under the name of the Old and the New Testament, are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them; or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up.

Be this as it may, they decided by *vote* which of the books out of the collection they had made, should be the WORD OF GOD, and which should not. They rejected several; they voted others to be doubtful, such as the books called the Apocrypha; and those books which had a majority of votes, were voted to be the word of God. Had they voted otherwise, all the people, since calling themselves christians, had believed otherwise; for the belief of the one comes from the vote of the other. Who the people were that did all this, we know nothing of; they called themselves by the general name of the church; and this is all we know of the matter.

As we have no other external evidence or authority for believing those books to be the word of God, than what I have mentioned, which is no evidence or authority at all, I come, in the next place, to examine the internal evidence contained in the books themselves.

In the former part of this essay, I have spoken of revelation, I now proceed further with that subject, for the purpose of applying it to the books in question.

Revelation is a communication of something, which the person, to whom that thing is revealed, did not know before. For if I have done a thing, or seen it done, it needs no revelation to tell me I have done it, or seen it, nor to enable me to tell it, or to write it.

Revelation, therefore, cannot be applied to any thing done upon earth of which man is himself the actor or the witness; and consequently all the historical and anecdotal part of the Bible, which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word revelation, and therefore is not the word of God.

When Sampson ran off with the gate-posts of Gaza, if he ever did so (and whether he did or not is nothing to us) or when he visited his Dalilah, or caught his foxes, or did any thing else, what has revelation to do with these things? If they were facts, he could tell them himself; or his secretary, if he kept one, could write them, if they were worth either telling or writing; and if they were fictions, revelation could not make them true; and whether true or not, we are neither the better nor the wiser for knowing them. When we contemplate the immensity of that Being, who directs and governs the incomprehensible WHOLE, of which the utmost ken of human sight can discover but a part, we ought to feel shame at calling such paltry stories the word of God.

As to the account of the creation, with which the book of Genesis opens, it has all the appearance of being a tradition which the Israelites had among them before they came into Egypt; and after their departure from that country, they put it at the head

of their history, without telling, as it is most probable that they did not know how they came by it. The manner in which the account opens, shews it to be traditional. It begins abruptly. It is nobody that speaks. It is nobody that hears. It is addressed to nobody. It has neither first, second, or third person. It has every criterion of being a tradition. It has no voucher. Moses does not take it upon himself by introducing it with the formality that he uses on other occasions, such as that of saying, "*The Lord spake unto Moses, saying.*"

Why it has been called the Mosaic account of the creation, I am at a loss to conceive. Moses, I believe, was too good a judge of such subjects to put his name to that account. He had been educated among the Egyptians, who were a people as well skilled in science, and particularly in astronomy, as any people of their day; and the silence and caution that Moses observes, in not authenticating the account, is a good negative evidence that he neither told it, nor believed it. The case is, that every nation of people, has been world-makers, and the Israelites had as much right to set up the trade of world-making as any of the rest; and as Moses was not an Israelite, he might not chuse to contradict the tradition. The account, however, is harmless; and this is more than can be said for many other parts of the Bible.

Whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and torturous executions, the

unrelenting vindictiveness, with which more than half the Bible is filled, it would be more consistent that we called it the word of a demon, than the word of God. It is a history of wickedness, that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind; and, for my own part, I sincerely detest it, as I detest every thing that is cruel.

We scarcely meet with any thing, a few phrases excepted, but what deserves either our abhorrence or our contempt, till we come to the miscellaneous parts of the Bible. In the anonymous publications, the Psalms and the Book of Job, more particularly, in the latter, we find a great deal of elevated sentiment reverentially expressed of the power and benignity of the Almighty; but they stand on no higher rank than many other compositions on similar subjects, as well before that time as since.

The proverbs, which are said to be Solomon's, though most probably a collection [because they discover a knowledge of life, which his situation excluded him from knowing] are an instructive table of ethics. They are inferior in keenness to the proverbs of the Spaniards, and not more wise and oeconomic than those of the American Franklin.

All the remaining parts of the Bible, generally known by the name of the prophets, are the works of the Jewish poets and itinerant preachers, who mixed poetry, anecdote, and devotion together; and those works still retain the air and style of poetry, though in translation.*

X 2

* As there are many readers who do not see that a composition is poetry, unless it be in rhyme, it is for their information that I add this note.

Poetry consists principally in two things; Imagery and composition. The composition of poetry differs from that of prose in the manner of mixing long and short syllables

There is not, throughout the whole book, called the Bible, any word that describes to us what we call a poet, nor any word that describes what we call poetry. The case is, that the word *prophet*, to which later times have affixed a new idea, was the Bible word for poet, and the word *prophefying* meant the art of making poetry. It also meant the art of playing poetry to a tune upon any instrument of Music.

We read of prophefying with pipes, tabrets, and horns. Of prophefying with harps, with psalteries, with cymbols, and with every other instrument of music then in fashion. Were we now to speak of prophefying with a fiddle, or with a pipe and tabor, the expression would have no meaning, or would appear ridiculous, and to some people contemptuous, because we have changed the meaning of the word.

We are told of Saul being among the *prophets*, and also that he prophefied; but we are not told what *they*

prophefied, nor what *he prophefied*. The case is, there was nothing to tell; for these prophets were a company of musicians and poets; and Saul joined in the concert; and this was called *prophefying*.

The account given of this affair in the book called Samuel, is, that Saul met a *company* of prophets; a whole company of them! coming down with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp, and that they prophefied, and that he prophefied with them. But it appears afterwards, that Saul prophefied badly, that is, he performed his part badly; for it is said, that “an *evil spirit from God* * came upon Saul and he prophefied.”

Now were there no other passage in the book, called the Bible, than this, to demonstrate to us that we have lost the original meaning of the word *prophefy*, and substituted another meaning in its place, this alone would be sufficient; for it is impossible to use and

lables together. Take a long syllable out of a line of poetry, and put a short one in the room of it, or put a long syllable where a short one should be, and that line will lose its poetical harmony. It will have an effect upon the line like that of misplacing a note in a song.

The imagery in those books, called the prophets, appertains altogether to poetry. It is fictitious and often extravagant, and not admissible in any other kind of writing than poetry.

To shew that these writings are composed in poetical numbers, I will take ten syllables as they stand in the book, and make a line of the same number of syllables (heroic measure) that shall rhyme with the last word. It will then be seen, that the composition of those books is poetical measure. The instance I shall first produce is from Isaiah.

“Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth.”

’Tis God himself, that calls attention forth.

Another instance I shall quote is from the mournful Jeremiah, to which I shall add two other lines, for the purpose of carrying out the figure, and shewing the intention of the poet.

“O! that mine head were waters, and mine eyes”

Were fountains, flowing like the liquid skies:

Then would I give the mighty flood release,

And weep a deluge for the human race.

* As those men, who call themselves divines and commentators, are very fond of puzzling one another, I leave them to contest the meaning of the first part of the phrase, that of, *an evil spirit of God*. I keep to my text. I keep to the meaning of the word *prophefy*.

apply the word *prophecy* in the place it is here used and applied, if we give to it the sense which later times have affixed to it. The manner in which it is here used strips it of all religious meaning, and shews that a man might then be a *prophet*, or might *prophecy*, as he may now be a poet, or a musician, without any regard to the morality or the immorality of his character. The word was originally a term of science, promiscuously applied to poetry and to music, and not restricted to any subject upon which poetry and music might be exercised.

Deborah and Barak are called prophets, not because they predicted any thing, but because they composed the poem or song that bears their name in celebration of an act already done: David is ranked among the prophets, for he was a musician; and was also reputed to be (though perhaps very erroneously) the author of the psalms. But Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are not called prophets. It does not appear from any accounts we have that they could either sing, play music, or make poetry.

We are told of the greater and the lesser prophets. They might as well tell us of the greater and the lesser God; for there cannot be degrees in prophesying consistently with its modern sense. But there are degrees in poetry, and therefore the phrase is reconcilable to the case, when we understand by it the greater and the lesser poets.

It is altogether unnecessary, after this, to offer any observations upon what those men, styled prophets, have written. The axe goes at once to the root, by shewing that the original meaning of the word has been mis-

taken, and consequently all the inferences that have been drawn from those books, the devotional respect that has been paid to them, and the laboured commentaries that have been written upon them, under that mistaken meaning, are not worth disputing about.—In many things, however, the writings of the Jewish poets, deserves a better fate than that of being bound up, as they now are, with the trash that accompanies them, under the abused name of the word of God.

If we permit ourselves to conceive right ideas of things, we must necessarily affix the idea, not only of unchangeableness, but of the utter impossibility of any change taking place, by any means or accident whatever, in that which we would honour with the name of the word of God: and therefore the word of God cannot exist in any written or human language.

The continually progressive change to which the meaning of words is subject, the want of an universal language which renders translations necessary, the errors to which translations are again subject, the mistakes of copyists and printers, together with the possibility of wilful alteration, are of themselves evidences, that human language, whether in speech or in print, cannot be the vehicle of the word of God.—The word of God exists in something else.

Did the book, called the Bible, excel in purity of ideas and expression, all the books that are now extant in the world, I would not take it for my rule of faith, as being the word of God; because the possibility would nevertheless exist of my being imposed upon. But when I see throughout the greatest part of this book,

scarcely any thing but a history of the grossest vices, and a collection of the most paltry and contemptible tales, I cannot dishonour my Creator by calling it by his name.

Thus much for the Bible. I now go on to the book called the New Testament. The *new* Testament! that is, the *new* Will, as if there could be two wills of the Creator.

Had it been the object or the intention of Jesus Christ to establish a new religion, he would undoubtedly have written the system himself, or *procured it to be written* in his life time. But there is no publication extant authenticated with his name. All the books called the new Testament were written after his death. He was a Jew by birth and by profession; and he was the Son of God in like manner that every other person is; for the Creator is the Father of All.

The first four books, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, do not give a history of the life of Jesus Christ, but only detached anecdotes of him. It appears from these books that the whole time of his being a preacher was not more than eighteen months; and it was only during this short time, that these men became acquainted with him. They make mention of him, at the age of twelve years, sitting, they say, among the Jewish doctors, asking and answering them questions. As this was several years before their acquaintance with him began, it is most probable they had this anecdote from his parents. From this time there is no account of him for about sixteen years. Where he lived, or how he employed himself during this interval, is not known. Most probably he was working at his father's trade, which was that of a

carpenter. It does not appear that he had any school education, and the probability is that he could not write, for his parents were extremely poor, as appears from their not being able to pay for a bed when he was born.

It is somewhat curious that the three persons whose names are the most universally recorded, were of very obscure parentage.—Moses was a foundling, Jesus Christ was born in a stable, and Mahomet was a muledriver. The first and the last of these men, were founders of different systems of religion; but Jesus Christ founded no new system. He called men to the practice of moral virtues, and the belief of one God. The great trait in his character is philanthropy.

The manner in which he was apprehended, shews that he was not much known at that time; and it shews also that the meetings he then held with his followers were in secret; and that he had given over, or suspended, preaching publicly. Judas could no otherwise betray him than by giving information where he was, and pointing him out to the officers that went to arrest him; and the reason for employing and paying Judas to do this, could arise only from the causes already mentioned, that of his not being much known, and living concealed.

The idea of his concealment not only agrees very ill with his reputed divinity, but associates with it something of pusillanimity; and his being betrayed, or in other words, his being apprehended, on the information of one of his followers, shews that he did not intend to be apprehended, and consequently that he did not intend to be crucified.

The Christian mythologists tell us, that Christ died for the sins of the

world, and that he came on *purpose to die*. Would it not then have been the same if he had died of a fever, or of the small pox, of old age, or of any thing else?

The declaratory sentence which, they say, was passed upon Adam in case he ate of the apple, was not, that *thou shalt surely be crucified, but thou shalt surely die*. The sentence was death, and not the *manner of dying*. Crucifixion, therefore, or any other particular manner of dying, made no part of the sentence that Adam was to suffer, and consequently, even upon their own tactic, it could make no part of the sentence that Christ was to suffer in the room of Adam. A fever would have done as well as a cross, if there was any occasion for either.

This sentence of death which, they tell us, was thus passed upon Adam, must either have meant dying naturally, that is, ceasing to live, or, have meant what these mythologists call damnation: and consequently, the act of dying on the part of Jesus Christ, must, according to their system, apply as a prevention to one or other of those two *things* happening to Adam and to us.

That it does not prevent our dying is evident, because we all die; and if their accounts of longevity be true, men die faster since the crucifixion than before: and with respect to the second explanation, (including with it the *natural death* of Jesus Christ as a substitute for the *eternal death or damnation* of all mankind) it is impertinently representing the Creator as coming off, or revoking the sentence, by a pun or a quibble upon the word *death*. That manufacturer of quibbles, St. Paul, if he wrote the books that bear his name, has helped this

quibble on, by making another quibble upon the word *Adam*. He makes there to be two Adams; the one who sins in fact, and suffers by proxy; the other who sins by proxy and suffers in fact. A religion thus interlarded with quibble, subterfuge and pun, has a tendency to instruct its professors in the practice of these arts. They acquire the habit without being aware of the cause.

If Jesus Christ was the Being which those mythologists tell us he was, and that he came into the world to *suffer*, which is a word they sometimes use instead of *to die*, the only real suffering he could have endured would have been *to live*. His existence here was a state of exilement or transportation from heaven, and the way back to his original country was to die.—In fine, every thing in this strange system is the reverse of what it pretends to be. It is the reverse of truth, and I become so tired with examining into its inconsistencies and absurdities, that I hasten to the conclusion of it in order to proceed to something better.

How much, or what parts of the books called the New Testament, were written by the persons whose names they bear, is what we can know nothing of, neither are we certain in what language they were originally written. The matters they now contain may be classed under two heads: anecdote and epistolary correspondence.

The four books already mentioned, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are altogether anecdotal. They relate events after they had taken place. They tell what Jesus Christ did and said, and what others did and said to him; and in several instances they relate the same event differently. Revelation is necessarily out of the ques-

tion with respect to those books ; not only because of the disagreement of the writers ; but because revelation cannot be applied to the relating of facts by the persons who saw them done, nor to the relating or recording of any discourse or conversation by those who heard it. The book, called the Acts of the Apostles, an anonymous work, belong also to the anecdotal part.

All the other parts of the New Testament, except the book of enigmas, called the Revelations, are a collection of letters under the name of Epistles ; and the forgery of letters has been such a common practice in the world, that the probability is, at least, equal, whether they are genuine or forged. One thing however, is much less equivocal, which is, that out of the matters contained in those books, together with the assistance of some old stories, the church has set up a system of religion very contradictory to the character of the person whose name it bears. It has set up a religion of pomp and of revenue in pretended imitation of a person whose life was humility and poverty.

The invention of a purgatory, and of the releasing of souls therefrom, by prayers, bought of the church with money ; the selling of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences, are revenue laws, without bearing that name or carrying that appearance. But the case nevertheless is, that those things derive their origin from the proxyism of the crucifixion, and the theory deduced therefrom, which was, that one person could stand in the place of another, and could perform meritorious services for him. The probability therefore is, that the whole theory or doctrine of what is

called the redemption (which is said to have been accomplished by the act of one person in the room of another) was originally fabricated on purpose to bring forward and build all those secondary and pecuniary redemptions upon ; and that the passages in the books upon which the idea or theory of redemption is built, have been manufactured and fabricated for that purpose. Why are we to give this church credit, when she tells us that those books are genuine in every part, any more than we give her credit for every thing else she has told us ; or for the miracles she says she has performed. That she *could* fabricate writings is certain, because she could write ; and the composition of the writings in question, is of that kind that any body might do it ; and that she *did* fabricate them is not more inconsistent with probability, than that she should tell us, as she has done, that she could and did work miracles.

Since then no external evidence can, at this long distance of time, be produced to prove whether the church fabricated the doctrine called redemption or not (for such evidence, whether for or against, would be subject to the same suspicion of being fabricated) the case can only be referred to the internal evidence which the thing carries of itself ; and this affords a very strong presumption of its being a fabrication. For the internal evidence is, that the theory or doctrine of redemption has for its basis, an idea of pecuniary justice, and not that of moral justice.

If I owe a person money and cannot pay him, and he threatens to put me in prison, another person can take the debt upon himself, and pay it

for me. But if I have committed a crime, every circumstance of the case is changed. Moral justice cannot take the innocent for the guilty, even if the innocent would offer itself. To suppose justice to do this, is to destroy the principle of its existence, which is the thing itself. It is then no longer justice. It is indiscriminate revenge.

This single reflection will shew that the doctrine of redemption is founded on a mere pecuniary idea corresponding to that of a debt which another person might pay; and as this pecuniary idea corresponds again with the system of second redemptions obtained through the means of money given to the church, for pardons, the probability is, that the same persons fabricated both the one and the other of those theories; and that, in truth, there is no such thing as redemption; that it is fabulous; and that man stands in the same relative condition with his Maker he ever did stand since man existed; and that it is his greatest consolation to think so.

Let him believe this, and he will live more consistently and morally than by any other system. It is by his being taught to contemplate himself as an out-law, as an out-cast, as a beggar, as a mumper, as one thrown, as it were, on a dunghill, at an immense distance from his Creator, and who must make his approaches by creeping and cringing to intermediate beings, that he conceives either a contemptuous disregard for every thing under the name of religion, or becomes indifferent, or turns what he calls devout. In the latter case, he consumes his life in grief, or the affectation of it. His prayers are reproaches. His humility is ingratitude. He calls himself a worm, and

the fertile earth a dunghill; and all the blessings of life by the thankless name of vanities. He despises the choicest gift of God to man, the GIFT OF REASON; and having endeavoured to force upon himself the belief of a system against which reason revolts, he ungratefully calls it *human reason*, as if a man could give reason to himself.

Yet with all this strange appearance of humility, and this contempt for human reason, he ventures into the boldest presumptions. He finds fault with every thing. His selfishness is never satisfied; his ingratitude is never at an end. He takes on himself to direct the Almighty what to do, even in the government of the universe. He prays dictatorially. When it is sun-shine, he prays for rain, and when it is rain, he prays for sun-shine. He follows the same idea in every thing that he prays for; for what is the amount of all his prayers, but an attempt to make the Almighty change his mind, and act otherwise than he does. It is as if he were to say—thou knowest not so well as I.

But some perhaps will say, Are we to have no word of God—No revelation? I answer, yes. There is a word of God; there is a revelation.

THE WORD OF GOD IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD: And it is in *this word*, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaketh universally to man.

Human language is local and changeable, and is therefore incapable of being used as the means of unchangeable and universal information. The idea that God sent Jesus Christ to publish, as they say, the glad tidings to all nations, from one end of the earth unto the other, is consistent only

with the ignorance of those who know nothing of the extent of the world, and who believed, as those world-favours believed, and continued to believe, for several centuries (and that in contradiction to the discoveries of philosophers, and the experience of navigators) that the earth was flat like a trencher; and that a man might walk to the end of it.

But how was Jesus Christ to make any thing known to all nations?—He could speak but one language, which was Hebrew; and there are in the world several hundred languages. Scarcely any two nations speak the same language, or understand each other; and as to translations, every man who knows any thing of languages, knows that it is impossible to translate from one language into another, not only without losing a great part of the original, but frequently of mistaking the sense; and besides all this, the art of printing was wholly unknown at the time Christ lived.

It is always necessary that the means that are to accomplish any end, be equal to the accomplishment of that end, or the end cannot be accomplished. It is in this, that the difference between finite and infinite power and wisdom discovers itself. Man frequently fails in accomplishing his end, from a natural inability of the power to the purpose; and frequently from the want of wisdom to apply power properly. But it is impossible for infinite power and wisdom to fail as man faileth. The means it useth are always equal to the end; but human language, more especially as there is not an universal language, is incapable of being used as an universal means of unchangeable and uniform information; and therefore it is not the means that God

useth in manifesting himself universally to man.

It is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of a *word of God* can unite. The creation speaketh an universal language, independently of human speech or human language, multiplied and various as they be. It is an ever existing original, which every man can read. It cannot be forged, it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be lost; it cannot be altered; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds; and this *word of God* reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of God.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible Whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the scripture, which any human hand might make, but the scripture called the Creation.

The only idea man can affix to the name of God, is, that of a *first cause*, the cause of all things. And incomprehensibly difficult as it is for man to conceive what a first cause is, he arrives at the belief of it, from the ten-fold greater difficulty of disbelieving it. It is difficult beyond description to conceive that space can

have no end; but it is more difficult to conceive an end.—It is difficult beyond description to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time; but it is more impossible to conceive a time when there shall be no time. In like manner of reasoning, every thing we behold carries in itself the internal evidence that it did not make itself. Every man is an evidence to himself, that he did not make himself; neither could his father make himself; nor his grandfather, nor any of his race; neither could any tree, plant, or animal, make itself; and it is the conviction arising from this evidence, that carries us on, as it were, by necessity to the belief of a first cause eternally existing, of a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by the power of which all things exist, and this first cause man calls God.

It is only by the exercise of reason that man can discover God. Take away that reason, and he would be incapable of understanding any thing; and, in this case, it would be just as consistent to read even the book called the Bible, to a horse as to a man. How then is it that those people pretend to reject reason?

Almost the only parts in the book, called the Bible, that convey to us any idea of God, are some chapters in Job, and the 19th psalm. I recollect no other. Those parts are true *deistical* compositions; for they treat of the *Deity* through his works. They take the book of Creation as the word of God; they refer to no other book; and all the inferences they make are drawn from that volume.

I insert, in this place, the 19th psalm, as paraphrased into English verse, by Addison. I recollect not

the prose, and where I write this, I have not the opportunity of seeing it.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue etherial sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim.
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.
Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wond'rous tale,
And nightly to the list'ning earth
Repeats the story of her birth.
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.
What tho' in solemn silence, all
Move round this dark terrestrial ball;
What tho' no real voice, nor sound,
Amidst their radiant orbs be found,
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
THE HAND THAT MADE US IS DIVINE.

What more does man want to know than that the hand, or power that made these things is divine, is omnipotent. Let him believe this, with the force it is impossible to repel if he permits his reason to act, and his rule of moral life will follow of course.

The allusions in Job have all of them the same tendency with this psalm; that of deducing or proving a truth, that would be otherwise unknown, from truths already known.

I recollect not enough of the passages in Job to insert them correctly; but there is one that occurs to me that is applicable to the subject I am speaking upon. "Canst thou by searching, find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?"

I know not how the printers have pointed this passage, for I keep no Bible: but it contains two distinct questions that admits of distinct answers.

First, Canst thou by *searching* find out God? Yes. Because, in the first place, I know I did not make myself, and yet I have existence; and by *searching* into the nature of other things, I find that no other thing could make itself; and yet millions of other things exist; therefore it is, that I know, by positive conclusion resulting from this search, that there is a power superior to all those things, and that power is God.

Secondly, Canst thou find out the Almighty to *perfection*? No. Not only because the power and wisdom he has manifested in the structure of the creation that I behold, is to me incomprehensible; but because even this manifestation, great as it is, is probably but a small display of that immensity of power and wisdom, by which millions of other worlds, to me invisible by their distance, were created and continue to exist.

It is evident that both these questions were put to the reason of the person to whom they are supposed to have been addressed; and it is only by admitting the first question to be answered affirmatively, that the second could follow. It would have been unnecessary, and even absurd, to have put a second question more difficult than the first, if the first question had been answered negatively. The two questions have different objects; the first refers to the existence of God, the second to his attributes. Reason can discover the one, but it falls infinitely short in discovering the whole of the other.

I recollect not a single passage in all the writings ascribed to the men, called apostles, that convey any idea of what God is. Those writings are chiefly controversial; and the gloominess of the subject they dwell upon, that of a man dying in agony on a cross, is better suited to the gloomy genius of a monk in a cell, by whom it is not impossible they were written, than to any man breathing the open air of the creation. The only passage that occurs to me, that has any reference to the works of God, by which only his power and wisdom can be known, is related to have been spoken by Jesus Christ, as a remedy against distrustful care. "Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin." This, however, is far inferior to the allusions in Job, and in the nineteenth psalm; but it is similar in idea, and the modesty of the imagery is correspondent to the modesty of the man.

As to the Christian system of faith, it appears to me as a species of atheism; a sort of religious denial of God. It professes to believe in a man rather than in God. It is a compound made up chiefly of manism with but little deism, and is as near to atheism as twilight is to darkness. It introduces between man and his Maker an opaque body which it calls a redeemer; as the moon introduces her opaque self between the earth and the sun, and it produces by this means a religious or an irreligious eclipse of light. It has put the whole orbit of reason into shade.

The effect of this obscurity has been that of turning every thing upside down, and representing it in reverse; and among the revolutions it

has thus magically produced, it has made a revolution in Theology.

That which is now called natural philosophy, embracing the whole circle of science, of which astronomy occupies the chief place, is the study of the works of God and of the power and wisdom of God in his works, and is the true theology.

As to the theology that is now studied in its place, it is the study of human opinions and of human fancies concerning God. It is not the study of God himself in the works that he has made, but in the works or writings that man has made; and it is not among the least of the mischiefs that the Christian system has done to the world, that it has abandoned the original and beautiful system of theology, like a beautiful innocent to distress and reproach, to make room for the hag of superstition.

The book of Job, and the 19th psalm, which even the church admits to be more ancient than the chronological order in which they stand in the book called the Bible, are theological orations conformable to the original system of theology. The internal evidence of those orations proves to a demonstration, that the study and contemplation of the works of creation, and of the power and wisdom of God revealed and manifested in those works, made a great part of the religious devotion of the times in which they were written; and it was this devotional study and contemplation that led to the discovery of the principles upon which, what are now called Sciences, are established; and it is to the discovery of these principles that almost all the arts that contribute to the convenience of human life, owe their existence. Every prin-

cipal art has some science for its parent, though the person who mechanically performs the work does not always, and but very seldom, perceive the connection.

It is a fraud of the christian system to call the sciences *human inventions*; it is only the application of them that is human. Every science has for its basis a system of principles as fixed and unalterable as those by which the universe is regulated and governed. Man cannot make principles; he can only discover them:

For example. Every person who looks at an almanack sees an account when an eclipse will take place, and he sees also that it never fails to take place according to the account there given. This shews that man is acquainted with the laws by which the heavenly bodies move. But it would be something worse than ignorance, were any church on earth to say, that those laws are an human invention.

It would also be ignorance, or something worse, to say, that the scientific principles, by the aid of which man is enabled to calculate and foreknow when an eclipse will take place, are an human invention. Man cannot invent any thing that is eternal and immutable; and the scientific principles he employs for this purpose, must, and are, of necessity, as eternal and immutable as the laws by which the heavenly bodies move, or they could not be used as they are, to ascertain the time when, and the manner how, an eclipse will take place.

The scientific principles that man employs to obtain the foreknowledge of an eclipse, or of any thing else relating to the motion of the heavenly bodies, are contained chiefly in that

part of science that is called trigonometry, or the properties of a triangle, which, when applied to the study of the heavenly bodies, is called astronomy: when applied to direct the course of a ship on the ocean, it is called navigation; when applied to the construction of figures drawn by a rule and compass, it is called geometry; when applied to the construction of plans of edifices, it is called architecture: when applied to the measurement of any portion of the surface of the earth, it is called land surveying. In fine, it is the soul of science. It is an eternal truth: It contains the *mathematical demonstration* of which man speaks, and the extent of its uses are unknown.

It may be said, that man can make or draw a triangle, and therefore a triangle is a human invention.

But the triangle, when drawn, is no other than the image of the principle: it is a delineation to the eye, and from thence to the mind, of a principle that would otherwise be imperceptible. The triangle does not make the principle, any more than a candle taken into a room that was dark, makes the chairs and tables that before were invisible. All the properties of a triangle exist independently of the figure, and existed before any triangle was drawn or thought of by man. Man had no more to do in the formation of those properties, or principles, than he had to do in making the laws by which the heavenly bodies move; and therefore the one must have the same divine origin as the other.

In the same manner as it may be said, that man can make a triangle, so also may it be said, he can make the mechanical instrument, called a

lever. But the principle by which the lever acts, is a thing distinct from the instrument, and would exist if the instrument did not: it attaches itself to the instrument after it is made; the instrument therefore can act no otherwise than it does act; neither can all the effort of human invention make it act otherwise. That which, in all such cases, man calls the *effect*, is no other than the principle itself rendered perceptible to the senses.

Since then man cannot make principles, from whence did he gain a knowledge of them, so as to be able to apply them, not only to things on earth, but to ascertain the motion of bodies so immensely distant from him as all the heavenly bodies are? From whence, I ask, *could* he gain that knowledge, but from the study of the true theology?

It is the structure of the universe that has taught this knowledge to man. That structure is an ever existing exhibition of every principle upon which every part of mathematical science is founded. The offspring of this science is mechanics; for mechanics is no other than the principles of science applied practically. The man who proportions the several parts of a mill, uses the same scientific principles, as if he had the power of constructing an universe: but as he cannot give to matter that invisible agency, by which all the component parts of the immense machine of the universe have influence upon each other, and act in motional unison together without any apparent contact, and to which man has given the name of attraction, gravitation, and repulsion, he supplies the place of that agency by the humble imitation of teeth and cogs. All the parts of

man's microcosm must visibly touch. But could he gain a knowledge of that agency, so as to be able to apply it in practice, we might then say, that another *canonical book* of the word of God had been discovered.

If man could alter the properties of the lever, so also could he alter the properties of the triangle: for a lever (taking that sort of lever, which is called a steel-yard for the sake of explanation) forms, when in motion, a triangle. The line it descends from, (one point of that line being in the fulcrum) the line it descends to, and the chord of the arc, which the end of the lever describes in the air, are the three sides of a triangle. The other arm of the lever describes also a triangle; and the corresponding sides of those two triangles, calculated scientifically or measured geometrically; and also the sines, tangents, and secants generated from the angles, and geometrically measured, have the same proportions to each other, as the different weights have that will balance each other on the lever, leaving the weight of the lever out of the case.

It may also be said that man can make a wheel and axis, that he can put wheels of different magnitudes together, and produce a mill. Still the case comes back to the same point, which is, that he did not make the principle that gives the wheels those powers. That principle is as unalterable as in the former cases, or rather it is the same principle under a different appearance to the eye.

The power that two wheels, of different magnitudes, have upon each other, is in the same proportion as if the semi-diameter of the two wheels were joined together and made into that kind of lever I have described, suspended at the part where the semi-di-

ameters join; for the two wheels, scientifically considered, are no other than the two circles generated by the motion of the compound lever.

It is from the study of the true theology that all our knowledge of science is derived, and it is from that knowledge that all the arts have originated.

The Almighty lecturer by displaying the principles of science in the structure of the universe, has invited man to study and to imitation. It is as if he had said to the inhabitants of this globe that we call ours, "I have
" made an earth for man to dwell upon,
" and I have rendered the starry heavens visible, to teach him science
" and the arts. He can now provide
" for his own comfort, AND LEARN
" FROM MY MUNIFICENCE TO ALL
" TO BE KIND TO EACH OTHER."

Of what use is it, unless it be to teach man something, that his eye is endowed with the power of beholding, to an incomprehensible distance, an immensity of worlds revolving in the ocean of space? Or of what use is it that this immensity of worlds is visible to man? What has man to do with the Pleiades, with Orion, with Sirius, with the star he calls the north star, with the moving orbs he has named Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, if no uses are to follow from their being visible? A less power of vision would have been sufficient for man, if the immensity he now possesses were given only to waste itself, as it were, on an immense desert of space glittering with shows.

It is only by contemplating what he calls the starry heavens, as the book and school of science, that he discovers any use in their being visible to him, or any advantage resulting from his immensity of vision. But

when he contemplates the subject in this light, he sees an additional motive for saying that *nothing was made in vain* ; for in vain would be this power of vision if it taught man nothing.

As the Christian system of faith has made a revolution in theology, so also has it made a revolution in the state of learning. That which is now called learning was not learning originally. Learning does not consist, as the schools now make it consist, in the knowledge of languages, but in the knowledge of things to which language gives names.

The Greeks were a learned people ; but learning with them, did not consist in speaking Greek, any more than in a Roman's speaking Latin, or a Frenchman's speaking French, or an Englishman's speaking English. From what we know of the Greeks, it does not appear that they knew or studied any language but their own ; and this was one cause of their becoming so learned ; it afforded them more time to apply themselves to better studies. The schools of the Greeks were schools of science and philosophy, and not of languages : and it is in the knowledge of the things that science and philosophy teach, that learning consists.

Almost all the scientific learning that now exists, came to us from the Greeks, or the people who spoke the Greek language. It therefore became necessary to the people of other nations, who spoke a different language, that some among them should learn the Greek language, in order that the learning the Greeks had might be made known in those nations, by translating the Greek books of science and philosophy into the mother tongue of each nation.

The study therefore of the Greek language, (and in the same manner for the Latin) was no other than the drudgery business of a linguist ; and the language thus obtained, was no other than the means, or as it were, the tools, employed to obtain the learning the Greeks had. It made no part of the learning itself ; and was so distinct from it, as to make it exceeding probable, that the persons who had studied Greek sufficiently to translate those works, such, for instance, as Euclid's Elements, did not understand any of the learning the works contained.

As there is now nothing new to be learned from the dead languages, all the useful books being already translated, the languages are become useless, and the time expended in teaching and in learning them is wasted. So far as the study of languages may contribute to the progress and communication of knowledge [for it has nothing to do with the *creation* of knowledge] it is only in the living languages that new knowledge is to be found : and certain it is, that, in general, a youth will learn more of a living language in one year, than of a dead language in seven ; and it is but seldom that the teacher knows much of it himself. The difficulty of learning the dead languages does not arise from any superior abstruseness in the languages themselves, but their *being dead*, and the pronunciation entirely lost. It would be the same thing with any other language when it becomes dead. The best Greek linguist, that now exists, does not understand Greek so well as a Grecian plowman did, or a Grecian milkmaid ; and the same for the Latin, compared with a plowman or a milkmaid of the Ro-

mans ; and with respect to pronunciation, and idiom, not so well as the cows that she milked. It would therefore be advantageous to the state of learning, to abolish the study of the dead languages, and to make learning consist, as it originally did, in scientific knowledge.

The apology that is sometimes made for continuing to teach the dead languages is, that they are taught at a time when a child is not capable of exerting any other mental faculty than that of memory. But this is altogether erroneous. The human mind has a natural disposition to scientific knowledge, and the things connected with it. The first and favourite amusement of a child, even before it begins to play, is that of imitating the works of man. It builds houses with cards or sticks ; it navigates the little ocean of a bowl of water with a paper boat ; or dams the stream of a gutter, and contrives something which it calls a mill ; and it interests itself in the fate of its works with a care that resembles affection. It afterwards goes to school, where its genius is killed by the barren study of a dead language, and the philosopher is lost in the linguist.

But the apology that is now made for continuing to teach the dead languages, could not be the cause at first of cutting down learning to the narrow and humble sphere of linguistry ; the cause, therefore, must be sought for elsewhere. In all researches of this kind, the best evidence that can be produced, is the internal evidence the thing carries with itself, and the evidence of circumstances that unites with it, both of which, in this case, are not difficult to be discovered.

Putting then aside, as matter of distinct consideration, the outrage of-

ferred to the moral justice of God, by supposing him to make the innocent suffer for the guilty, and also the loose morality and low contrivance of supposing him to change himself into the shape of a man, in order to make an excuse to himself for not executing his supposed sentence upon Adam ; putting, I say, those things aside, as matter of distinct consideration, it is certain, that what is called the christian system of faith including in it the whimsical account of the creation ; the strange story of Eve, the snake and the apple, the amphibious idea of a man-god ; the corporeal idea of the death of a God ; the mythological idea of a family of gods ; and the christian system of arithmetic, that three are one, and one is three, are all irreconcilable, not only to the divine gift of reason that God has given to man, but to the knowledge that man gains of the power and wisdom of God, by the aid of the sciences, and by studying the structure of the universe that God has made.

The settlers up, therefore, and the advocates of the christian system of faith, could not but foresee that the continually progressive knowledge that man would gain by the aid of science, of the power and wisdom of God manifested in the structure of the universe, and in all the works of creation, would militate against, and call into question, the truth of their system of faith ; and therefore it became necessary to their purpose to cut learning down to a size less dangerous to their projects, and this they effected by restricting the idea of learning to the dead study of dead languages.

They not only rejected the study of science out of the christian schools, but they persecuted it ; and it is only within about the last two centuries

that the study has been revived. So late as 1610 Galileo, a Florentine, discovered and introduced the use of telescopes, and by applying them to observe the motions and appearances of the heavenly bodies, afforded additional means for ascertaining the true structure of the universe. Instead of being esteemed for these discoveries, he was sentenced to renounce them or the opinions resulting from them, as a damnable heresy. And prior to that time Virgilius was condemned to be burned for asserting the antipodes, or in other words, that the earth was a globe, and habitable in every part where there was land; yet the truth of this is now too well known even to be told.

If the belief of errors not morally bad did no mischief, it would make no part of the moral duty of man to oppose and remove them. There was no moral ill in believing the earth was flat like a trencher, any more than there was moral virtue in believing it was round like a globe; neither was there any moral ill in believing that the Creator made no other world than this, any more than there was moral virtue in believing that he made millions, and that the infinity of space is filled with worlds. But when a system of religion is made to grow out of a supposed system of creation that is not true, and to unite itself therewith in a manner almost inseparable therefrom, the case assumes an entirely different ground. It is then that errors, not morally bad, become fraught with the same

mischiefs as if they were. It is then that the truth, though otherwise indifferent itself, becomes an essential, by becoming the criterion, that either confirms by corresponding evidence, or denies by contradictory evidence, the reality of the religion itself. In this view of the case it is the moral duty of man to obtain every possible evidence, that the structure of the heavens, or any other part of creation affords, with respect to systems of Religion. But this, the supporters or partizans of the christian system, as if dreading the result, incessantly opposed, and not only rejected the sciences, but persecuted the professors. Had Newton or Descartes lived three or four hundred years ago, and pursued their studies as they did, it is most probable they would not have lived to finish them; and had Franklin drawn lightning from the clouds at the same time, it would have been at the hazard of expiring for it in flames.

Latter times have laid all the blame upon the Goths and Vandals, but, however unwilling the partizans of the Christian system may be to believe or to acknowledge it, it is nevertheless true, that the age of ignorance commenced with the Christian system. There was more knowledge in the world before that period than for many centuries afterwards; and as to religious knowledge, the Christian system, as already said, was only another species of mythology; and the mythology to which it succeeded, was a corruption of an ancient system of theism.*

* It is impossible for us to know at what time the heathen mythology began; but it is certain, from the internal evidence that it carries, that it did not begin in the same state or condition in which it ended. All the gods of that mythology, except Saturn, were of modern invention. The supposed reign of Saturn was prior to that which is called the heathen mythology, and was so far a species of theism that it admitted

It is owing to this long interregnum of science, *and to no other cause*, that we have now to look back through a vast chasm of many hundred years to the respectable characters we call the antients. Had the progression of knowledge gone on proportionably with the stock that before existed, that chasm would have been filled up with characters rising superior in knowledge to each other; and those antients, we now so much admire, would have appeared respectably in the background of the scene. But the christian system laid all waste; and if we take our stand about the beginning of the sixteenth century, we look back thro' that long chasm, to the times of the ancients, as over a vast sandy desert, in which not a shrub appears to intercept the vision to the fertile hills beyond.

It is an inconsistency, scarcely possible to be credited, that any thing should exist under the name of a *religion*, that held it to be *irreligious* to study and contemplate the structure of the universe that God had made. But the fact is too well established to be denied. The event that served more than any other, to break the

first link in this long chain of despotic ignorance, is that known by the name of the reformation by Luther. From that time, though it does not appear to have made any part of the intention of Luther, or of those who are called reformers, the Sciences began to revive, and Liberality, their natural associate, began to appear. This was the only public good the reformation did; for with respect to religious good, it might as well not have taken place. The mythology still continued the same; and a multiplicity of national popes grew out of the downfall of the Pope of Christendom.

Having thus shewn, from the internal evidence of things, the cause that produced a change in the state of learning, and the motive for substituting the study of the dead languages in the place of the Sciences, I proceed, in addition to the several observations already made in the former part of this work, to compare, or rather to confront, the evidence that the structure of the universe affords, with the christian system of religion. But as I cannot begin this part better than by referring to the ideas that occurred to me at an early part of

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admitted the belief of only one God. Saturn is supposed to have abdicated the government in favour of his three sons and one daughter, Jupiter, Pluto, Neptune and Juno: after this, thousands of other gods and demi-gods were imaginarily created, and the calendar of gods increased as fast as the calendar of saints, and the calendar of courts have increased since.

All the corruptions that have taken place in theology, and in religion, have been produced by admitting of what man calls *revealed religion*. The mythologists pretended to more revealed religion than the christians do. They had their oracles and their priests, who were supposed to receive and deliver the word of God verbally on almost all occasions.

Since then all corruptions, down from Moloch to modern predestinarianism, and the human sacrifices of the heathens to the Christian sacrifice of the Creator, have been produced by admitting what is called *revealed religion*, the most effectual means to prevent all such evils and impositions, is not to admit of any other revelation than that which is manifested in the book of creation; and to contemplate the Creation, as the only true and real word of God that ever did or ever will exist, and that every thing else, called the word of God is fable and imposition.

life, and which I doubt not have occurred in some degree to almost every other person at one time or other, I shall state what those ideas were, and add thereto such other matter as shall arise out of the subject, giving to the whole, by way of preface, a short introduction.

My father being of the quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceeding good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school,* I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school.

The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination. As soon as I was able I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr. Bevis, of the society, called the Royal Society, then living in the Temple, and an excellent astronomer.

I had no disposition for what was called politics. It presented to my mind no other idea than is contained in the word Jockeyship. When, therefore, I turned my thoughts towards matters of government, I had to form a system for myself, that accorded with the moral and philosophic principles in which I had been edu-

cated. I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a vast scene opening itself to the world in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me, that unless the Americans changed the plan they were then pursuing, with respect to the government of England, and declare themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was then offering itself to mankind through their means. It was from these motives that I published the work known by the name of *Common Sense*, which is the first work I ever did publish: and so far as I can judge of myself, I believe I never should have been known in the world as an author on any subject whatever, had it not been for the affairs of America. I wrote *Common Sense* the latter end of the year 1775, and published it the first of January 1776. Independence was declared the fourth of July following.

Any person who has made observations on the state and progress of the human mind, by observing his own, cannot but have observed, that there are two distinct classes of what are called Thoughts: those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat those voluntary visitors with civility, taking care to examine, as well as I was able, if they were worth entertaining; and it is from them I have acquired almost all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any person gains from school education, it serves only, like a small capital, to put him in the way of begin-

* The same school, Thetford in Norfolk, that the present Counsellor Mingay went to, and under the same master.

ning learning for himself afterwards. —Every person of learning is finally his own teacher; the reason of which is, that principles, being of a distinct quality to circumstances, cannot be impressed upon the memory. Their place of mental residence is the understanding, and they are never so lasting as when they begin by conception. Thus much for the introductory part.

From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair; I scarcely knew which it was: but I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the subject of what is called *Redemption by the death of the Son of God*. After the sermon was ended I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (for I perfectly recollect the spot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son when he could not revenge himself any other way, and as I was sure a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons. This was not one of those kind of thoughts that had any thing in it of childish levity; it was to me a serious reflection arising from the idea I had, that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment; and I moreover believe, that any system of religion that has any thing in it that shocks

the mind of a child, cannot be a true system.

It seems as if parents of the christian profession were ashamed to tell their children any thing about the principles of their religion. They sometimes instruct them in morals, and talk to them of the goodness of what they call Providence; for the christian mythology has five deities; there is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the God Providence, and the Goddess Nature. But the Christian story of God the Father putting his son to death, or employing people to do it (for that is the plain language of the story) cannot be told by a parent to a child; and to tell him that it was done to make mankind happier and better, is making the story still worse, as if mankind could be improved by the example of murder; and to tell him that all this is a mystery, is only making an excuse for the incredibility of it.

How different is this to the pure and simple profession of Deism! The true deist has but one Deity; and his religion consists in contemplating the power, wisdom, and benignity of the Deity in his works, in endeavouring to imitate him in every thing moral, scientific, and mechanical.

The religion that approaches the nearest of all others to true deism, in the moral and benign part thereof, is that professed by the quakers, but they have contracted themselves too much by leaving the works of God out of their system. Though I reverence their philanthropy, I cannot help smiling at the conceit, that if the taste of a quaker, could have been consulted at the creation, what a silent and drab-coloured creation it would have been! Not a flower would have

blossomed its gaieties, nor a bird been permitted to sing.

Quitting these reflections, I proceed to other matters. After I had made myself master of the use of the globes and of the orrery,* and conceived an idea of the infinity of space, and of the eternal divisibility of matter, and obtained, at least, a general knowledge of what is called natural philosophy, I began to compare or as I have before said, to confront, the internal evidence those things afford with the christian system of faith.

Though it is not a direct article of the Christian system that this world that we inhabit is the whole of the habitable creation, yet it is so worked up therewith, from what is called the Mosaic account of the creation, the story of Eve and the apple, and the counterpart of that story, the death of the Son of God, that to believe otherwise, that is, to believe that God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous; and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot be held together in the same mind; and he who thinks that he believes both, has thought but little of either.

Though the belief of a plurality of worlds was familiar to the ancients,

it is only within the last three centuries that the extent and dimensions of this globe that we inhabit, have been ascertained. Several vessels, following the tract of the ocean, have sailed entirely round the world, as a man may march in a circle, and come round by the contrary side of the circle to the spot he set out from. The circular dimensions of our world in the widest part, as a man would measure the widest round of an apple or a ball, is only twenty five thousand and twenty English miles, reckoning sixty-nine miles and an half to an equatorial degree, and may be sailed round in the space of about three years.†

A world of this extent may, at first thought, appear to us to be great; but if we compare it with the immensity of space in which it is suspended, like a bubble or a balloon in the air; it is infinitely less in proportion than the smallest grain of sand is to the size of the world, or the finest particle of dew to the whole ocean; and is therefore but small; and, as will be hereafter shewn, is only *one* of a system of worlds, of which the universal creation is composed.

It is not difficult to gain some faint idea of the immensity of space in which this and all the other worlds are suspended, if we follow a pro-

* As this book may fall into the hands of persons who do not know what an orrery is, it is for their information I add this note, as the name gives no idea of the uses of the thing. The orrery has its name from the person who invented it. It is a machinery of clock-work, representing the universe in miniature: and in which the revolution of the earth round itself and round the sun, the revolution of the moon round the earth, the revolution of the planets round the sun, their relative distances from the sun, as the centre of the whole system, their relative distances from each other, and their different magnitudes, are represented as they really exist in what we call the heavens.

† Allowing a ship to sail, on an average three miles in an hour, she would sail entirely round the world in less than one year, if she could sail in a direct circle; but she is obliged to follow the course of the ocean.

gression of ideas. When we think of the size or dimensions of a room, our ideas limit themselves to the walls, and there they stop. But when our eye, or our imagination darts into space, that is, when it looks upwards into what we call the open air, we cannot conceive any walls or boundaries it can have; and if, for the sake of resting our ideas, we suppose a boundary, the question immediately renews itself, and asks, what is beyond that boundary? and in the same manner, what is beyond the next boundary? and so on, till the fatigued imagination returns and says, *there is no end*. Certainly, then, the Creator was not pent for room when he made this world no larger than it is; and we have to seek the reason in something else.

If we take a survey of our own world, or rather of this, of which the Creator has given us the use, as our portion in the immense system of creation, we find every part of it, the earth, the waters, and the air that surround it, filled, and as it were, crowded with life, down from the largest animals that we know of, to the smallest insects the naked eye can behold, and from thence to others still smaller, and totally invisible without the assistance of the microscope.

—Every tree, every plant, every leaf, serves not only as an habitation, but as a world to some numerous race, till animal existence becomes so exceedingly refined, that the effluvia of a blade of grass would be food for thousands.

Since then no part of our earth is left unoccupied, why is it to be supposed, that the immensity of space is a naked void, lying in eternal waste. There is room for millions of worlds

as large or larger than ours, and each of them millions of miles apart from each other.

Having now arrived at this point, if we carry our ideas only one thought further, we shall see, perhaps, the true reason, at least a very good reason for our happiness, why the Creator, instead of making one immense world, extending over an immense quantity of space, has preferred dividing that quantity of matter into several distinct and separate worlds, which we call planets, of which our earth is one.——But before I explain my ideas upon this subject, it is necessary, (not for the sake of those that already know, but for these who do not) to shew what the system of the universe is.

That part of the universe, that is called the solar system (meaning the system of worlds to which our earth belongs, and of which, Sol, or in English language the Sun, is the centre) consists, besides the Sun, of six distinct orbs, or planets, or worlds, besides the secondary bodies, called the satellites, or moons, of which our earth has one that attends her in her annual revolution round the sun, in like manner as the other satellites, or moons, attend the planets, or worlds, to which they severally belong, as may be seen by the assistance of the telescope.

The Sun is the centre, round which those six worlds, or planets, revolve at different distances therefrom, and in circles concentric to each other. Each world keeps constantly in near the same tract round the Sun, and continues at the same time, turning round itself, in nearly an upright position, as a top turns round itself, when it is spinning on the ground, and leans a little sideways.

It is this leaning of the earth, ($23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees) that occasions summer and winter, and the different length of days and nights. If the earth turned round itself in a position perpendicular to the plane or level of the circle it moves in round the Sun, as a top turns round when it stands erect on the ground, the days and nights would be always of the same length, twelve hours day, and twelve hours night, and the season would be uniformly the same throughout the year.

Every time that a planet [our earth for example] turns round itself, it makes what we call day and night; and every time it goes entirely round the Sun, it makes what we call a year, consequently our world turns three hundred and sixty-five times round itself, in going once round the Sun.*

The names that the ancients gave to those six worlds, and which are still called by the same names, are Mercury, Venus, this world that we call ours, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. They appear larger to the eye than the stars, being many million miles nearer to our earth than any of the stars are. The planet Venus is that which is called the evening star, and sometimes the morning star, as she happens to set after, or rise before the Sun, which, in either case, is never more than three hours.

The Sun, as before said, being the centre, the planet, or world, nearest the Sun, is Mercury; his distance from the Sun is thirty-four million miles, and he moves round in a circle always

at that distance from the Sun, as a top may be supposed to spin round in the tract in which a horse goes in a mill. The second world is Venus; she is fifty-seven million miles distant from the Sun, and consequently moves round in a circle much greater than that of Mercury. The third world is this that we inhabit, and which is eighty-eight million miles distant from the Sun, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Venus. The fourth world is Mars; he is distant from the Sun one hundred and thirty-four million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of our earth. The fifth is Jupiter; he is distant from the Sun five hundred and fifty-seven million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle greater than that of Mars. The sixth world is Saturn; he is distant from the Sun seven hundred and sixty-three million miles, and consequently moves round in a circle that furrounds the circles or orbits of all the other worlds or planets.

The space, therefore, in the air, or in the immensity of space, that our solar system takes up for the several worlds to perform their revolutions in round the Sun, is of the extent in a strait line of the whole diameter of the orbit or circle, in which Saturn moves round the Sun, which being double his distance from the Sun is fifteen hundred and twenty-six million miles; and its circular extent is nearly five thousand million; and its globical content is

* Those who supposed that the Sun went round the earth every twenty-four hours, made the same mistake in idea, that a cook would do in fact, that should make the fire go round the meat, instead of the meat turning round itself towards the fire.

almost three thousand five hundred million times three thousand five hundred million square miles.*

But this, immense as it is, is only one system of worlds. Beyond this, at a vast distance into space, far beyond all power of calculation, are the stars called the fixed stars. They are called fixed, because they have no revolutionary motion as the fix worlds or planets have that I have been describing. Those fixed stars continue always at the same distance from each other, and always in the same place, as the Sun does in the centre of our system. The probability therefore is, that each of those fixed stars is also a Sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions, as our system of worlds does round our central Sun.

By this easy progression of ideas, the immensity of space will appear to us to be filled with systems of worlds: and that no part of space lies at waste, any more than any part of our globe of earth and water is left unoccupied.

Having thus endeavoured to convey, in a familiar and easy manner, some idea of the structure of the universe, I return to explain what I before alluded to, namely, the great benefits arising to man in consequence of the

Creator having made a *plurality* of worlds, such as our system is, consisting of a central sun and six worlds, besides satellites, in preference to that of creating one world only of a vast extent.

It is an idea I never lost sight of, that all our knowledge of science is derived from the revolutions [exhibited to our eye, and from thence to our understanding] which those several planets, or worlds, of which our system is composed, make in their circuit round the Sun.

Had then the quantity of matter which these six worlds contain been blended into one solitary globe, the consequence to us would have been, that either no revolutionary motion would have existed, or not a sufficiency of it, to give us the ideas and the knowledge of science we now have; and it is from the sciences that all the mechanical arts that contribute so much to our earthly felicity and comfort are derived.

As therefore the Creator made nothing in vain, so also must it be believed that he organized the structure of the universe in the most advantageous manner for the benefit of man; and as we see, and from experience feel, the benefits we derive from the structure of the universe, formed as it

* If it should be asked, how can man know these things? I have one plain answer to give, which is, that man knows how to calculate an eclipse, and also how to calculate, to a minute of time, when the planet Venus, in making her revolutions round the Sun, will come in a straight line between our earth and the Sun, and will appear to us about the size of a large pea passing across the face of the Sun. This happens but twice in about an hundred years, at the distance of about eight years from each other, and has happened twice in our time, both of which were foreknown by calculation. It can also be known when they will happen again for a thousand years to come, or to any other portion of time. As, therefore, man could not be able to do those things if he did not understand the solar system, and the manner in which the revolutions of the several planets or worlds are performed, the fact of calculating an eclipse or a transit of Venus, is a proof in point that the knowledge exists; and as to a few thousand, or even a few million miles more or less, it makes scarcely any sensible difference in such immense distances.

is, which benefits we should not have had the opportunity of enjoying, if the structure so far as relates to our system, had been a solitary globe, we can discover, at least, one reason why a *plurality* of worlds has been made, and that reason calls forth the devotional gratitude of man, as well as his admiration.

But it is not to us, the inhabitants of this globe only, that the benefits arising from a plurality of worlds are limited. The inhabitants of each of the worlds, of which our system is composed, enjoy the same opportunities of knowledge as we do. They behold the revolutionary motions of our earth as we behold theirs. All the planets revolve in sight of each other; and therefore the same universal school of science presents itself to all.

Neither does the knowledge stop here. The system of worlds, next to us, exhibits in its revolutions, the same principles and school of science, to the inhabitants of their system, as our system does to us, and in like manner throughout the immensity of space.

Our ideas, not only of the almightiness of the Creator, but of his wisdom and his beneficence, become enlarged in proportion as we contemplate the extent and the structure of the universe. The solitary idea of a solitary world rolling, or at rest, in the immense ocean of space, gives place to the cheerful idea of a society of worlds, so happily contrived, as to administer, even by their motions, instruction to man. We see our own earth filled with abundance; but we forget to consider how much of that abundance is owing to the scientific knowledge the vast machinery of the universe has unfolded.

But, in the midst of those reflections, what are we to think of the christian system of faith that forms itself upon the idea of only one world, and that of no greater extent, as is before shewn, than twenty-five thousand miles. An extent, which a man walking at the rate of three miles an hour, for twelve hours in the day, could he keep on in a circular direction, would walk entirely round in less than two years. Alas! what is this to the mighty ocean of space, and the almighty power of the Creator!

From whence then could arise the solitary and strange conceit that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world, because, they say, one man and one woman had eaten an apple. And, on the other hand, are we to suppose that every world, in the boundless creation, had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a redeemer. In this case, the person who is irreverently called the Son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarcely a momentary interval of life.

It has been, by rejecting the evidence, that the word, or works of God in the creation, affords to our senses, and the action of our reason upon that evidence, that so many wild and whimsical systems of faith, and of religion, have been fabricated and set up. There may be many systems of religion, that so far from being morally bad, are in many respects morally good: but there can be but ONE that is true; and that one, necessarily must, as it ever will, be in all things consistent with the ever existing word of God that we behold

in his works. But such is the strange construction of the Christian system of faith, that every evidence the heavens affords to man, either directly contradicts it, or renders it absurd.

It is possible to believe, and I always feel pleasure in encouraging myself to believe it, that there have been men in the world who persuaded themselves that, what is called a *pious fraud*, might, at least under particular circumstances, be productive of some good. But the fraud being once established, could not afterwards be explained; for it is with a pious fraud, as with a bad action, it begets a calamitous necessity of going on.

The persons who first preached the christian system of faith, and in some measure combined with it the morality preached by Jesus Christ, might persuade themselves that it was better than the heathen mythology that then prevailed. From the first preachers, the fraud went on to the second, and to the third, till the idea of its being a pious fraud became lost in the belief of its being true; and that the belief came again encouraged by the interest of those who made a livelihood by preaching it.

But though such a belief might, by such means, be rendered almost general among the laity, it is next to impossible to account for the continual persecution carried on by the church, for several hundred years, against the science and against the professors of science, if the church had not some record or some tradition, that it was originally no other than a pious fraud, or did not foresee, that it could not be maintained against the evidence that the structure of the universe afforded.

Having thus shewn the irreconcilable inconsistencies between the real

word of God existing in the universe, and that which is called *the word of God*, as shewn to us in a printed book, that any man might make, I proceed to speak of the three principal means that have been employed in all ages, and perhaps in all countries, to impose upon mankind.

Those three means are, Mystery, Miracle, and Prophecy. The two first are incompatible with true religion, and the third ought always to be suspected.

With respect to mystery, every thing we behold is, in one sense a mystery, to us. Our own existence is a mystery: the whole vegetable world is a mystery. We cannot account how it is that an acorn, when put into the ground, is made to develop itself, and become an oak. We know not how it is that the seed we sow unfolds and multiplies itself, and returns to us such an abundant interest for so small a capital.

The fact, however, as distinct from the operating cause, is not a mystery, because we see it; and we know also the means we are to use, which is no other than putting the seed in the ground. We know therefore as much as is necessary for us to know; and that part of the operation that we do not know, and which if we did, we could not perform, the Creator takes upon himself and performs it for us. We are therefore better off than if we had been let into the secret, and left to do it for ourselves.

But though every created thing is in this sense a mystery, the word mystery cannot be applied to *moral truth*, any more than obscurity can be applied to light. The God in whom we believe is a God of moral truth, and not a God of mystery or obscu-

urity. Mystery is the antagonist of truth. It is a fog of human invention, that obscures truth and represents it in distortion. Truth never envelops *itself* in mystery; and the mystery in which it is at any time enveloped, is the work of its antagonist and never of itself.

Religion, therefore, being the belief of a God, and the practice of moral truth, cannot have connection with mystery. The belief of God, so far from having any thing of mystery in it, is of all beliefs the most easy, because it arises to us, as is before observed, out of necessity. And the practice of moral truth, or in other words, a practical imitation of the moral goodness of God, is no other than our acting towards each other, as he acts benignly towards all. We cannot *serve* God in the manner we serve those who cannot do without such service; and, therefore, the only idea we can have of serving God, is that of contributing to the happiness of the living creation that God has made. This cannot be done by retiring ourselves from the society of the world, and spending a recluse life in selfish devotion.

The very nature and design of religion, if I may so express it, prove even to demonstration, that it must be free from every thing of mystery, and unincumbered with every thing that is mysterious. Religion, considered as a duty, is incumbent upon every living soul alike, and therefore must be on a level to the understanding and comprehension of all. Man does not learn religion as he learns the secrets and mysteries of a trade. He learns the theory of religion by reflection. It arises out of the action of his own mind upon the things

which he sees, or upon what he may happen to hear or to read, and the practice joins itself thereto.

When men, whether from policy or pious fraud, set up systems of religion incompatible with the word or works of God in the creation, and not only above but repugnant to human comprehension, they were under the necessity of inventing, or adopting, a word that should serve as a bar to all questions, inquiries, and speculations. The word *mystery* answered this purpose; and thus it has happened, that religion, which, in itself, is without mystery, has been corrupted into a fog of mysteries.

As *mystery* answered all general purposes, *miracle* followed as an occasional auxiliary. The former served to bewilder the mind, the latter to puzzle the senses. The one was the lingo; the other the legerdemain.

But before going further into this subject, it will be proper to inquire what is to be understood by a miracle.

In the same sense that every thing may be said to be a mystery, so also may be said, that every thing is a miracle, and that no one thing is a greater miracle than another. The Elephant though larger, is not a greater miracle than a mite; nor a mountain a greater miracle than an atom. To an almighty power, it is no more difficult to make the one than the other, and no more difficult to make a million worlds than to make one. Every thing therefore is a miracle in one sense; whilst, in the other sense there is no such thing as a miracle. It is a miracle when compared to our power, and to our comprehension. It is not a miracle compared to the power that performs it. But as nothing in this descrip-

tion conveys the idea that is affixed to the word miracle, it is necessary to carry the enquiry further.

Mankind have conceived to themselves certain laws by which, what they call, nature, is supposed to act; and that a miracle is something contrary to the operation and effect of those laws. But unless we know the whole extent of those laws, and of what are commonly called, the powers of nature, we are not able to judge whether any thing that may appear to us wonderful or miraculous be within, or beyond, or be contrary to, her natural power of acting.

The ascension of a man several miles high into the air, would have every thing in it that constitutes the idea of a miracle, if it were not known that a species of air can be generated several times lighter than the common atmospheric air, and yet possess elasticity enough to prevent the balloon, in which that light air is enclosed, from being compressed into as many times less bulk, by the common air that surrounds it. In like manner, extracting flashes or sparks of fire from the human body as visibly as from a steel struck with a flint, and causing iron or steel to move without any visible agent, would also give the idea of a miracle, if we were not acquainted with electricity and magnetism: so also would many other experiments in natural philosophy, to those who are not acquainted with the subject. The restoring persons to life, who are to appearance dead, as is practised upon drowned persons, would also be a miracle, if it were not known that animation is capable of being suspended without being extinct.

Besides these, there are performances by flight of hand, and by persons acting in concert, that have a miracu-

lous appearance, which, when known, are thought nothing of. And besides these, there are mechanical and optical deceptions. There is now an exhibition in Paris of ghosts and spectres, which, though it is not imposed upon the spectators as a fact, has an astonishing appearance. As therefore we know not the extent to which either nature or art can go, there is no positive criterion to determine what a miracle is; and mankind, in giving credit to appearances, under the idea of their being miracles, are subject to be continually imposed upon.

Since then appearances are so capable of deceiving, and things not real have a strong resemblance to things that are, nothing can be more inconsistent, than to suppose, that the Almighty would make use of means, such as are called miracles, that would subject the person who performed them to the suspicion of being an impostor, and the person who related them to be suspected of lying, and the doctrine intended to be supported thereby, to be suspected as a fabulous invention.

Of all the modes of evidence that ever were invented to obtain belief to any system or opinion, to which the name of religion has been given, that of *miracle*, however successful the imposition may have been, is the most inconsistent. For, in the first place, whenever recourse is had to show, for the purpose of procuring that belief, (for a miracle, under any idea of the word, is a show) it implies a lameness or weakness in the doctrine that is preached. And, in the second place, it is degrading the Almighty into the character of a show-man, playing tricks to amuse and make the people stare and wonder. It is also the most

equivocal sort of evidence that can be set up; for the belief is not to depend upon the thing called a miracle, but upon the credit of the reporter, who says that he saw it; and therefore the thing, were it true, would have no better chance of being believed than if it were a lie?

Suppose, I were to say, that when I sat down to write this book, a hand presented itself in the air, took up the pen, and wrote every word that is herein written; would any body believe me? certainly they would not. Would they believe me a whit the more if the thing had been a fact? certainly they would not. Since then, a real, miracle, were it to happen, would be subject to the same fate as the falsehood, the inconsistency becomes the greater, of supposing the Almighty would make use of means that would not answer the purpose for which they were intended, even if they were real.

If we are to suppose a miracle to be something so entirely out of the course of what is called nature, that she must go out of that course to accomplish it; and we see an account given of such miracle by the person who said he saw it, it raises a question in the mind very easily decided, which is, Is it more probable that nature should go out of her course, or that a man should tell a lie? We have never seen, in our time, nature go out of her course, but we have good reason to believe that millions of lies have been told in the same time; it is therefore at least, millions to one, that the reporter of a miracle tells a lie.

The story of the whale swallowing Jonah, though a whale is large enough to do it, borders greatly on the marvellous; but it would have approached nearer to the idea of a miracle, if Jonah had swallowed the whale. In this, which may serve for all cases of miracles, the matter would decide it-

self as before stated, namely, Is it more probable that a man should have swallowed a whale, or told a lie?

But supposing that Jonah had really swallowed the whale, and gone with it in his belly to Ninevah, and to convince the people that it was true, have cast it up in their sight of the full length and size of a whale, would they not have believed him to have been the devil instead of a prophet? or, if the whale had carried Jonah to Ninevah, and cast him up in the same public manner, would they not have believed the whale to have been the devil, and Jonah one of his imps?

The most extraordinary of all the things called miracles, related in the New Testament, is that of the devil flying away with Jesus Christ, and carrying him to the top of a high mountain; and to the top of the highest pinnacle of the temple, and shewing him, and promising to him *all the kingdoms of the world*. How happened it that he did not discover America? or is it only with *kingdoms* that his sooty highness has any interest?

I have too much respect for the moral character of Christ, to believe that he told this whale of a miracle himself; neither is it easy to account for what purpose it could have been fabricated, unless it were to impose upon the connoisseurs of miracles, as is sometimes practised upon the connoisseurs of Queen Anne's farthings, and collectors of relics and antiquities; or to render the belief of miracles ridiculous, by outdoing miracle, as Don Quixote outdid chivalry: or to embarrass the belief of miracles by making it doubtful by what power, whether of God, or of the devil, any thing called a miracle was performed. It requires, however, a great deal of faith in the devil to believe this miracle.

In every point of view, in which those things called miracles can be placed and considered, the reality of them is improbable, and their existence unnecessary. They would not, as before observed, answer any useful purpose, even if they were true; for it is more difficult to obtain belief to a miracle, than to a principle evidently moral, without any miracle. Moral principle speaks universally for itself. Miracle could be but a thing of the moment, and seen but by a few; after this, it requires a transfer of faith, from God to man, to believe a miracle upon man's report. Instead therefore of admitting the recitals of miracles, as evidence of any system of religion being true, they ought to be considered as symptoms of its being fabulous. It is necessary to the full and upright character of truth, that it rejects the crutch; and it is consistent with the character of fable, to seek the aid that truth rejects. Thus much for mystery and miracle.

As mystery and miracle took charge of the past and the present, prophecy took charge of the future, and rounded the tenses of faith. It was not sufficient to know what had been done, but what would be done. The supposed prophet was the supposed historian of times to come; and if he happened, in shooting with a long bow of a thousand years, to strike within a thousand miles of a mark, the ingenuity of posterity could make it point blank; and if he happened to be directly wrong, it was only to suppose, as in the case of Jonah and Ninevah, that God had repented himself, and changed his mind. What a fool do fabulous systems make of man!

It has been shewn in a former part of this work, that the original mean-

ing of the words *prophet* and *prophecy* has been changed, and that a prophet, in the sense the word is now used, is a creature of modern invention; and it is owing to this change in the meaning of the words, that the flights and metaphors of the Jewish poets, and phrases and expressions now rendered obscure by our not being acquainted with the local circumstances to which they applied at the time they were used, have been erected into prophecies, and made to bend to explanations at the will and whimsical conceits of sectaries, expounders, and commentators. Every thing unintelligible is prophetic, and every thing insignificant was typical. A blunder would have served for a prophecy, and a dish-clout for a type.

If by a prophet we are to suppose a man, to whom the Almighty communicated some event that would take place in future, either there were such men or there were not. If there were, it is consistent to believe that the event, so communicated, would be told in terms that could be understood, and not related in such a loose and obscure manner as to be out of the comprehension of those that heard it, and so equivocal as to fit almost any circumstance that might happen afterwards. It is conceiving very irreverently of the Almighty to suppose he would deal in this jesting manner with mankind: yet all the things called prophecies, in the book called the Bible, come under this description.

But it is with prophecy as it is with miracle. It could not answer the purpose even if it were real. Those to whom a prophecy should be told, could not tell whether the man prophesied or lied, or whether it had been revealed to him, or whether he conceited it;

and if the thing that he prophesied, or pretended to prophecy, should happen, or something like it among the multitude of things that are daily happening, nobody could again know whether he fore-knew it, or guessed at it, or whether it was accidental. A prophet, therefore is a character useless and unnecessary; and the safe side of the case is, to guard against being imposed upon by not giving credit to such relations.

Upon the whole, mystery, miracle, and prophecy, are appendages that belong to fabulous and not to true religion. They are the means by which so many *Lo heres! and Lo theres!* have been spread about the world, and religion been made into a trade. The success of one impostor gave encouragement to another, and the quieting salvo of doing *some good* by keeping up a *pious fraud*, protected them from remorse.

Having now extended the subject to a greater length than I first intended, I shall bring it to a close by abstracting a summary from the whole.

First, that the idea or belief of a word of God existing in print, or in writing, or in speech, is inconsistent in itself for the reasons already assigned. These reasons among many others, are the want of an universal language; the mutability of language; the errors to which translations are subject; the possibility of totally suppressing such a word; the probability of altering it, or of fabricating the whole, and imposing it upon the world.

Secondly, That the creation we behold is the real and ever existing word

of God, in which we cannot be deceived. It proclaimeth his power, it demonstrates his wisdom, it manifests his goodness and beneficence.

Thirdly, That the moral duty of man consists in imitating the moral goodness and beneficence of God manifested in the creation towards all his creatures. That seeing, as we daily do, the goodness of God to all men, it is an example calling upon all men to practise the same towards each other; and consequently that every thing of persecution and revenge between man and man, and every thing of cruelty to animals, is a violation of moral duty.

I trouble not myself about the manner of future existence. I content myself with believing, even to positive conviction, that the power that gave me existence is able to continue it, in any form and manner he pleases, either with or without this body; and it appears more probable to me that I shall continue to exist hereafter, than that I should have had existence, as I now have, before that existence began.

It is certain that, in one point, all nations of the earth, and all religions agree. All believe in a God. The things in which they disagree are the redundancies annexed to that belief; and therefore, if ever an universal religion should prevail, it will not be believing any thing new, but in getting rid of redundancies, and believing as men believed at first. Adam, if ever there was such a man, was created a Deist; but in the mean time let every man follow as he has a right to do, the religion and the worship he prefers.

P R E F A C E.

I HAVE mentioned in the former part of *The Age of Reason*, that it had long been my intention to publish my thoughts upon Religion; but that I had originally reserved it to a later period in life, intending it to be the last work I should undertake. The circumstances, however, which existed in France in the latter end of the year 1790, determined me to delay it no longer. The just and humane principles of the Revolution, which Philosophy had first diffused, had been departed from. The Idea, always dangerous to Society as it is derogatory to the Almighty—that priests could forgive sins—though it seemed to exist no longer, had blunted the feelings of humanity, and callously prepared men for the commission of all manner of crimes. The intolerant spirit of religious persecution had transferred itself into politics; the tribunals, styled Revolutionary, supplied the place of the Inquisition; and the Guillotine of the State out-did the Fire and Faggot of the Church. I saw many of my most intimate friends destroyed; others daily carried to prison; and I had reason to believe, and had also intimations given me, that the same danger was approaching myself.

Under these disadvantages, I began the former part of the *Age of Reason*; I had, besides, neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, though I was writing against both; nor could I procure any; notwithstanding which, I have produced a work that no Bible Believer, though writing at his ease, and with a Library of Church Books about him, can refute. Towards the latter end of December of that year, a motion was made and carried, to exclude foreigners from the Convention. There were but two in it, Anacharsis Clootz and myself, and I saw I was particularly pointed at by Bourdon de l'Oise, in his speech on that motion.

Conceiving, after this, that I had but a few days of liberty, I sat down, and brought the work to a close as speedily as possible; and I had not finished it more than six hours, in the state it has since appeared, before a guard came, about three in the morning, with an order, signed by the two Committees of Public Safety and Surety General, for putting me in arrestation as a foreigner, and conveying me to the prison of the Luxembourg. I contrived, in my way there, to call on

Joel Barlow, and I put the Manuscript of the work into his hands, as more safe than in my possession in Prison : and not knowing what might be the fate in France, either of the writer or the work, I addressed it to the protection of the citizens of the United States.

It is with justice that I say, that the guard who executed this order, and the interpreter of the Committee of General Surety, who accompanied them to examine my papers, treated me not only with civility, but with respect. The keeper of the Luxembourg, Benoit, a man of a good heart, shewed to me every friendship in his power, as did also all his family, while he continued in that station. He was removed from it, put into arrestation, and carried before the tribunal upon a malignant accusation, but acquitted.

After I had been in the Luxembourg about three weeks, the Americans, then in Paris, went in a body to the Convention, to reclaim me as their countryman and friend ; but were answered by the President, Vadier, who was also President of the Committee of Surety General, and had signed the order for my arrestation, that I was born in England. I heard no more after this, from any person out of the walls of the Prison, till the fall of Robespierre, on the 9th of Thermidor.

About two months before this event, I was seized with a fever, that in its progress had every symptom of becoming mortal. It was then that I remembered with renewed satisfaction, and congratulated myself most sincerely, on having written the former part of " The Age of Reason." I had then but little expectation of surviving, and those about me had less. I know therefore, by experience, the conscientious trial of my own principles.

I was then with three chamber comrades : Joseph Vanhuele of Bruges, Charles Bastini, and Michael Robyns of Louvain. The unceasing and anxious attention of these three friends to me, by night and day, I remember with gratitude, and mention with pleasure. It happened that a physician (Dr. Graham) and a surgeon (Mr. Bond) part of the suite of General O'Hara, were then in the Luxembourg : I ask not myself, whether it be convenient to them, as men under the English Government, that I express to them my thanks ; but I should reproach myself if I did not ; and also to the physician of the Luxembourg, Dr. Marhashi.

I have some reason to believe, because I cannot discover any other cause, that this illness preserved me in existence. Among the papers of Robespierre, that were examined and reported upon to the Convention by a Committee of Deputies, is a note in the hand-writing of Robespierre, in the following words :

Demander que Thomas Paine
soit decreté d'accusation, pour l'in-
terêt de l'Amerique autant que de
la France.

Demand that Thomas Paine be
decreed of accusation, for the in-
terest of America as well as of
France.

From what cause it was that the intention was not put in execution, I know not, and cannot inform myself; and I ascribe it to impossibility, on account of that illness.

The Convention, to repair as much as lay in their power the injustice I had sustained, invited me publicly and unanimously to return into the Convention, and which I accepted, to shew I could bear an injury without permitting it to injure my principles, or my disposition. It is not because right principles have been violated, that they are to be abandoned.

I have seen, since I have been at liberty, several publications written, some in America, and some in England, as answers to the former part of "The Age of Reason." If these authors can amuse themselves by so doing, I shall not interrupt them. They may write against the work, and against me, as much as they please; they do me more service than they intend, and I can have no objection that they write on. They will find, however, by this Second Part, without its being written as an answer to them, that they must return to their work, and spin their cobweb over again. The first is brushed away by accident.

They will now find that I have furnished myself with a Bible and Testament; and I can say also, that I have found them to be much worse books than I had conceived. If I have erred in any thing, in the former part of the Age of Reason, it has been by speaking better of some parts of those books than they deserved.

I observe, that all my opponents resort, more or less, to what they call Scripture-evidence and Bible Authority, to help them out. They are so little masters of the subject, as to confound a dispute about authenticity with a dispute about doctrines; I will however put them right, that if they should be disposed to write any more, they may know how to begin.

THOMAS PAINE.

P A I N E ' s W O R K S .

T H E

A G E O F R E A S O N .

P A R T II.

IT has often been said that any thing may be proved from the Bible; but before any thing can be admitted as proved by Bible, the Bible itself must be proved to be true; for if the Bible be not true, or the truth of it be doubtful, it ceases to have authority, and cannot be admitted as proof of any thing.

It has been the practice of all Christian commentators on the Bible, and of all Christian priests and preachers, to impose the Bible on the world as a mass of truth, and as the word of God; they have disputed and wrangled, and have anathematized each other about the supposeable meaning of particular parts and passages therein; one has said and insisted that such a passage meant such a thing; another, that it meant directly the contrary; and a third, that it meant neither one nor the other, but something different from both; and this they have called *understanding* the Bible.

It has happened, that all the answers which I have seen to the former part of the *Age of Reason* have been written by priests; and these pious men, like their predecessors, con-

tend and wrangle, and pretend to *understand* the Bible; each understands it differently, but each understands it best; and they have agreed in nothing, but in telling their readers, that Thomas Paine understands it not.

Now, instead of wasting their time, and heating themselves in fractious disputations about doctrinal points drawn from the Bible, these men *ought to know*, and if they do not, it is civility to inform them, that the first thing to be understood is, whether there is sufficient authority for believing the Bible to be the word of God, or whether there is not?

There are matters in that book, said to be done by *the express command* of God, that are as shocking to humanity, and to every idea we have of moral justice, as any thing done by Robespierre, by Carrier, by Joseph le Bon, in France; by the English government, in the East-Indies; or by any other assassin in modern times. When we read in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, &c. that they (the Israelites) came by stealth upon whole nations of people, who, as the history itself shews, had given them no of-

fence ; that they put all those nations to the sword : that they spared neither age nor infancy ; that they utterly destroyed men, women, and children ; that they left not a soul to breathe ; expressions that are repeated over and over again in those books, and that too with exulting ferocity : are we sure these things are facts ? are we sure that the Creator of man commissioned these things to be done ? are we sure that the books that tell us so, were written by his authority ?

It is not the antiquity of a tale, that is any evidence of it's truth ; on the contrary, it is a symptom of it's being fabulous ; for the more ancient any history pretends to be, the more it has the resemblance of a fable. The origin of every nation is buried in fabulous tradition, and that of the Jews is as much to be suspected as any other. To charge the commission of acts upon the Almighty, which in their own nature, and by every rule of moral justice, are crimes, as all assassination is, and more especially the assassination of infants, is matter of serious concern. The Bible tells us, that those assassinations were done by the *express command of God*. To believe therefore the Bible to be true, we must *unbelieve* all our belief in the moral justice of God ; for wherein could crying or smiling infants offend ? And to read the Bible without horror, we must undo every thing that is tender, sympathizing, and benevolent in the heart of man. Speaking for myself, if I had no other evidence that the Bible is fabulous, than the sacrifice I must make to believe it to be true, that alone would be sufficient to determine my choice.

But in addition to all the moral evidence against the Bible, I will in the progress of this work, produce such other evidence, as even a priest cannot deny ; and shew from that evidence, that the Bible is not entitled to credit, as being the word of God.

But before I proceed to this examination, I will shew wherein the Bible differs from all other ancient writings with respect to the nature of the evidence necessary to establish it's authenticity ; and this is the more proper to be done, because the advocates of the Bible, in their answers to the former part of the *Age of Reason*, undertake to say, and they put some stress thereon, that the authenticity of the Bible is as well established, as that of any other ancient book : as if our belief of the one could become any rule for our belief of the other.

I know, however, but of one ancient book that authoritatively challenges universal consent and belief ; and that is *Euclid's Elements of Geometry*, * and the reason is, because it is a book of self evident demonstration, entire independent of it's author, and of every thing relating to time, place, and circumstance. The matters contained in that book, would have the same authority they now have, had they been written by any other person, or had the work been anonymous, or had the author never been known ; for the identical certainty of who was the author, makes no part of our belief of the matters contained in the book. But it is quite otherwise with respect to the books ascribed to Moses, to Joshua, to Samuel, &c. : those are books of *testimony*, and they testify of things naturally incredible ;

* Euclid according to chronological history, lived three hundred years before Christ, and about one hundred before Archimedes ; he was of the city of Alexandria.

and therefore the whole of our belief, as to the authenticity of those books, rests, in the first place, upon the *certainty* that they were written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel; secondly, upon the credit we give to their testimony. We may believe the first, that is, may believe the certainty of the authorship, and yet not the testimony; in the same manner that we may believe that a certain person gave evidence upon a case, and yet not believe the evidence that he gave. But if it should be found, that the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, were not written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, every part of the authority and authenticity of those books is gone at once; for there can be no such thing as forged or invented testimony; neither can there be anonymous testimony, more especially as to things naturally incredible; such as that of talking with God face to face, or that of the sun and moon standing still at the command of a man.

The greatest part of the other ancient books are works of genius; of which kind are those ascribed to Homer, to Plato, to Aristotle, to Demosthenes, to Cicero, &c. Here again the author is not an essential in the credit we give to any of those works; for as works of genius, they would have the same merit they have now, were they anonymous. Nobody believes the Trojan story, as related by Homer, to be true; for it is the poet only that is admired; and the merit of the poet will remain, though the story be fabulous. But if we disbelieve the matters related by the Bible authors, (Moses for instance,) as we disbelieve the things related by Homer, there remains nothing of Moses in our estimation, but an impostor. As to the ancient historians, from Herodotus to Tacitus, we credit them as far as they

relate things probable and credible, and no further; for if we do, we must believe the two miracles which Tacitus relates were performed by Vespasian, that of curing a lame man, and a blind man, in just the same manner as the same things are told of Jesus Christ by his historians. We must also believe the miracle cited by Josephus, that of the sea of Pamphilia opening to let Alexander and his army pass, as is related of the Red Sea in Exodus. These miracles are quite as well authenticated as the Bible miracles, and yet we do not believe them; consequently the degree of evidence necessary to establish our belief of things naturally incredible, whether in the Bible or elsewhere, is far greater than that which obtains our belief to natural and probable things; and therefore the advocates for the Bible have no claim to our belief of the Bible, because that we believe things stated in other ancient writings; since we believe the things stated in those writings no further than they are probable and credible, or because they are self-evident, like Euclid; or admire them because they are elegant, like Homer; or approve them because they are sedate, like Plato; or judicious, like Aristotle.

Having premised those things, I proceed to examine the authenticity of the Bible; and I begin with what are called the five books of Moses, *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy*. My intention is to shew, that those books are spurious, and that Moses is not the author of them; and still further, that they were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterwards; that they are no other than an attempted history of the life of Moses, and of the times in which he is said to have lived, and also of the times prior there-

to, written by some very ignorant and stupid pretenders to authorship, several hundred years after the death of Moses; as men now write histories of things that happened or are supposed to have happened, several hundred, or several thousand years ago.

The evidence that I shall produce in this case is from the books themselves; and I will confine myself to this evidence only. Were I to refer for proofs to any of the ancient authors, whom the advocates of the Bible call prophane authors, they would controvert that authority, as I controvert their's: I will therefore meet them on their own ground, and oppose them with their own weapon, the Bible.

In the first place, there is no affirmative evidence that Moses is the author of those books; and that he is the author, is altogether an unfounded opinion got abroad, nobody knows how. The style and manner in which those books are written, give no room to believe, or even to suppose, they were written by Moses; for it is altogether the style and manner of another person speaking of Moses. In Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, (for every thing in Genesis is prior to the times of Moses, and not the least allusion is made to him therein,) the whole, I say, of these books is in the third person; it is always, *the Lord said unto Moses, or Moses said unto the Lord; or Moses said unto the people, or the people said unto Moses;* and this is the style and manner that historians use, in speaking of the persons whose lives and actions they are writing. It may be said, that a man may speak of himself in the third person, and therefore it may be supposed that Moses did; but supposition proves nothing; and if the advo-

cates for the belief that Moses wrote those books himself have nothing better to advance than supposition, they may as well be silent.

But granting the grammatical right, that Moses might speak of himself in the third person, because any man might speak of himself in that manner, it cannot be admitted as a fact in those books, that it is Moses who speaks, without rendering Moses truly ridiculous and absurd:—for example, Numbers, chap. xii. ver. 3, “*Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were on the face of the earth.*” If Moses said this of himself, instead of being the meekest of men, he was one of the most vain and arrogant of coxcombs; and the advocates for those books may now take which side they please, for both sides are against them: if Moses was not the author, the books are without authority; and if he was the author, the author is without credit, because to boast of *meekness*, is the reverse of meekness, and is *a lie in sentiment*.

In Deuteronomy, the style and manner of writing marks more evidently than in the former books, that Moses is not the writer. The manner here used is dramatical; the writer opens the subject by a short introductory discourse, and then introduces Moses as in the act of speaking, and when he has made Moses finish his harangue, he (the writer) resumes his own part, and speaks till he brings Moses forward again, and at last closes the scene with an account of the death, funeral, and character of Moses.

This interchange of speakers occurs four times in this book: from the first verse of the first chapter, to the end of the fifth verse, it is the writer who speaks; he then introduces Moses as in the act of making his harangue,

and this continues to the end of the 40th verse of the fourth chapter; here the writer drops Moses, and speaks historically of what was done in consequence of what Moses, when living, is supposed to have said, and which the writer has dramatically rehearsed.

The writer opens the subject again in the first verse of the fifth chapter, though it is only by saying, that Moses called the people of Israel together; he then introduces Moses as before, and continues him, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 26th chapter. He does the same thing at the beginning of the 27th chapter, and continues Moses, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 28th chapter. At the 29th chapter the writer speaks again through the whole of the first verse, and the first line of the second verse, where he introduces Moses for the last time, and continues him, as in the act of speaking, to the end of the 33d chapter.

The writer having now finished the rehearsal on the part of Moses, comes forward, and speaks through the whole of the last chapter: he begins by telling the reader, that Moses went up to the top of Pisgah, that he saw from thence the land which (the writer says) had been promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that *he*, Moses, died there, in the land of Moab, but that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day, that is, unto the time in which the writer lived, who wrote the book of Deuteronomy. The writer then tells us, that Moses was one hundred and ten years of age when he died—that his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated; and he concludes, by saying, that there arose not a prophet *since* in Israel like unto Moses, whom,

says this anonymous writer, the Lord knew face to face.

Having thus shewn, as far as grammatical evidence applies, that Moses was not the writer of those books, I will, after making a few observations on the inconsistencies of the writer of the Book of Deuteronomy, proceed to shew, from the historical and chronological evidence contained in those books, that Moses *was not*, because *he could not be*, the writer of them; and consequently, that there is no authority for believing, that the inhuman and horrid butcheries of men, women, and children, told of in those books, were done, as those books say they were, at the command of God. It is a duty incumbent on every true deist, that he vindicates the moral justice of God, against the calumnies of the Bible.

The writer of the book of Deuteronomy, whoever he was, for it is an anonymous work, is obscure, and also in contradiction with himself in the account he has given of Moses.

After telling that Moses went to the top of Pisgah, (and it does not appear from any account that he ever came down again,) he tells us, that Moses died *there* in the land of Moab, and that *he* buried him in a valley in the land of Moab; but as there is no antecedent to the pronoun *he*, there is no knowing who the *he* was, that did bury him. If the writer meant that *he* (God) buried him, how should *he* (the writer) know it? or why should we (the readers) believe him? since we know not who the writer was that tells us so, for certainly Moses could not himself tell where he was buried.

The writer also tells us, that no man knoweth where the sepulchre of

Moses is *unto this day*, meaning the time in which this writer lived; how then should he know that Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab? for as the writer lived long after the time of Moses, as is evident from his using the expression, *unto this day*, meaning a great length of time after the death of Moses, he certainly was not at his funeral; and, on the other hand, it is impossible that Moses himself could say, that *no man knoweth where the sepulchre is unto this day*. To make Moses the speaker, would be an improvement on the play of a child that hides itself, and cries, *nobody can find me*; nobody can find Moses.

This writer has no where told us how he came by the speeches which he has put into the mouth of Moses to speak, and therefore we have a right to conclude, that he either composed them himself, or wrote them from oral tradition. One or other of these is the more probable, since he has given, in the fifth chapter, a table of commandments, in which that called the fourth commandment is different from the fourth commandment in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. In that of Exodus, the reason given for keeping the seventh day is, because (says the commandment) God made the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested on the seventh; but in that of Deuteronomy, the reason given is, that it was the day on which the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and *therefore*, says this commandment, *the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day*. This makes no mention of the creation, nor *that* of the coming out of Egypt. There are also many things given as laws of Moses in this book,

that are not to be found in any of the other books, among which is that inhuman and brutal law, chap. xxi. ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, which authorizes parents, the father and the mother, to bring their own children to have them stoned to death, for what it is pleased to call stubbornness. But priests have always been fond of preaching up Deuteronomy, for Deuteronomy preaches up tythes: and it is from this book, chap. xxv. ver. 4, they have taken the phrase and applied it to tything, that *thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn*: and that this might not escape observation, they have noted it in the table of contents, at the head of the chapter, though it is only a single verse of less than two lines. O priests! priests! ye are willing to be compared to an ox, for the sake of tythes. Though it is impossible for us to know *identically* who the writer of Deuteronomy was, it is not difficult to discover him *professionally*, that he was some Jewish priest, who lived, as I shall shew in the course of this work, at least three hundred and fifty years after the time of Moses.

I come now to speak of the historical and chronological evidence. The chronology that I shall use is the Bible chronology; for I mean not to go out of the Bible for evidence of any thing, but to make the Bible itself prove historically and chronologically that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him. It is therefore proper that I inform the reader, (such an one, at least, as may not have the opportunity of knowing it,) that in the larger Bibles, and also in some smaller ones, there is a series of chronology printed in the margin of every page, for the purpose of shewing how long

the historical matters stated in each page happened, or are supposed to have happened, before Christ, and consequently, the distance of time between one historical circumstance and another.

I begin with the book of Genesis. In the 14th chapter of Genesis, the writer gives an account of Lot being taken prisoner in a battle between the four kings against five, and carried off; and that when the account of Lot being taken, came to Abraham, he armed all his household, and marched to rescue Lot from the captors; and that he pursued them unto Dan (ver. 14).

To shew in what manner this expression of *pursuing them unto Dan* applies to the case in question, I will refer to two circumstances, the one in America, the other in France. The city now called New York, in America, was originally New Amsterdam; and the town in France, lately called Havre-Marat, was before called Havre-de-Grace. New Amsterdam was changed to New York in the year 1664; Havre-de-Grace to Havre-Marat in the year 1793. Should, therefore, any writing be found, though without date, in which the name of New York should be mentioned, it would be certain evidence that such a writing could not have been written before, and must have been written after New Amsterdam was changed to New York, and consequently not till after the year 1664, or at least during the course of that year. And in like manner, any dateless writing, with the name of Havre-Marat, would be certain evidence that such a writing must have been written after Havre-de-Grace became Havre-Marat, and consequently not till after

the year 1793, or at least during the course of that year.

I now come to the application of those cases, and to shew that there was no such place as *Dan*, till many years after the death of Moses; and consequently that Moses could not be the writer of the book of Genesis, where this account of pursuing them unto *Dan* is given.

The place that is called Dan in the Bible, was originally a town of the Gentiles, called Laish; and when the tribe of Dan seized upon this town, they changed it's name to Dan, in commemoration of Dan, who was the father of that tribe, and the great grandson of Abraham.

To establish this in proof, it is necessary to refer from Genesis to the 18th chapter of the book, called the book of Judges. It is there said, (ver. 27,) that *they (the Danites) came unto Laish to a people that were quiet and secure, and they smote them with the edge of the sword, (the Bible is filled with murder,) and burned the city with fire; and they built a city, (ver. 28.) and dwelt therein, and they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.*

This account of the Danites taking possession of Laish, and changing it to Dan, is placed in the book of Judges immediately after the death of Samson. The death of Samson is said to have happened 1120 years before Christ, and that of Moses 1451 before Christ, and therefore, according to the historical arrangement, the place was not called Dan till 331 years after the death of Moses.

There is a striking confusion between the historical and the chrono-

logical arrangement in the book of Judges. The five last chapters, as they stand in the book, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, are put chronologically before all the preceding chapters; they are made to be 28 years before the 16th chapter, 266 before the 15th, 245 before the 13th, 195 before the 9th, 90 before the 4th, and 15 years before the 1st chapter. This shews the uncertain and fabulous state of the Bible. According to the chronological arrangement, the taking of Laish, and giving it the name of Dan, is made to be twenty years after the death of Joshua, who was the successor of Moses: and by the historical order, as it stands in the book, it is made to be 306 years after the death of Joshua, and 331 after that of Moses; but they both exclude Moses from being the writer of Genesis, because, according to either of the statements, no such a place as Dan existed in the time of Moses; and therefore the writer of Genesis must have been some person who lived after the town of Laish had the name of Dan; and who that person was nobody knows, and consequently the book of Genesis is anonymous, and without authority.

I proceed now to state another point of historical and chronological evidence, and to shew therefrom, as in the preceding case, that Moses is not the author of the book of Genesis.

In the 36th chapter of Genesis there is given a genealogy of the sons and descendants of Esau, who are called Edomites, and also a list, by name, of the kings of Edom; in enumerating of which, it is said, verse 31, "*And these are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*"

Now, were any dateless writing to be found, in which, speaking of any

past events, the writer should say, these things happened before there was any congress in America, or before there was any convention in France, it would be evident that such writing could not have been written before, and could only be written after there was a congress in America, or a convention in France, as the case might be; and consequently that it could not be written by any person who died before there was a congress in the one country, or a convention in the other.

Nothing is more frequent, as well in history as in conversation, than to refer to a fact in the room of a date; it is most natural so to do, first, because a fact fixes itself in the memory better than a date; secondly, because the fact includes the date, and serves to excite two ideas at once; and this manner of speaking by circumstances, implies as positively, that the fact alluded to is *past*, as if it was so expressed. When a person, in speaking upon any matter, says, it was before I was married, or before my son was born, or before I went to America, or before I went to France, it is absolutely understood, and intended to be understood, that he has been married, that he has had a son, that he has been in America, or been in France. Language does not admit of using this mode of expression in any other sense; and whenever such an expression is found any where, it can only be understood in the sense in which only it could have been used.

The passage, therefore, that I have quoted,—“that these are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned *any* king over the children of Israel,” could only have been written after the first king began to reign over them; and consequently that the book of Genesis, so far from having been

written by Moses, could not have been written till the time of Saul at least. This is the positive sense of the passage: but the expression, *any* king, implies more kings than one; at least, it implies two; and this will carry it to the time of David; and if taken in a general sense, it carries itself through all times of the Jewish monarchy.

Had we met with this verse in any part of the Bible that *professed* to have been written after kings began to reign in Israel, it would have been impossible not to have seen the application of it. It happens then that this is the case; the two books of Chronicles, which gave a history of *all* the kings of Israel, are *professedly*, as well as in fact, written after the Jewish monarchy began; and this verse that I have quoted, and all the remaining verses of the 36th chapter of Genesis, are, word for word, in the 1st chapter of Chronicles, beginning at the 43d verse.

It was with consistency that the writer of the Chronicles could say, as he has said, 1st Chron. chap. i. verse 43, *These are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*, because he was going to give, and has given, a list of the kings that had reigned in Israel; but as it is impossible that the same expression could have been used before that period, it is as certain as any thing can be proved from historical language, that this part of Genesis is taken from Chronicles, and that Genesis is not so old as Chronicles, and probably not so old as the book of Homer, or as Æsop's Fables; admitting Homer to have been, as the tables of chronology state, contemporary with David or Solomon, and Ælc,

to have lived about the end of the Jewish monarchy.

Take away from Genesis the belief that Moses was the author, on which only the strange belief that it is the word of God has stood, and there remains nothing of Genesis, but an anonymous book of stories, fables, and traditionary or invented absurdities, or of downright lies. The story of Eve and the serpent, and of Noah and his ark, drops to a level with the Arabian Tales, without the merit of being entertaining; and the account of men living to eight and nine hundred years, becomes as fabulous as the immortality of the giants of the Mythology.

Besides, the character of Moses, as stated in the Bible, is the most horrid that can be imagined. If those accounts be true, he was the wretch that first began and carried on wars on the score, or on the pretence of religion; and under that mask, or that infatuation, committed the most unexampled atrocities that are to be found in the history of any nation, of which I will state only one instance.

When the Jewish army returned from one of their plundering and murdering excursions, the account goes on as follows, Numbers, chap. xxxi. ver. 13.

“And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp; and Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle; and Moses said unto them, *Have ye saved all the women alive?* behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against

the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now, therefore, *kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known a man by lying with him; but all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.*"

Among the detestable villains that in any period of the world have disgraced the name of man, it is impossible to find a greater than Moses, if this account be true. Here is an order to butcher the boys, to massacre the mothers, and debauch the daughters.

Let any mother put herself in the situation of those mothers; one child murdered, another destined to violation, and herself in the hands of an executioner: let any daughter put herself in the situation of those daughters, destined as prey to the murderers of a mother and a brother, and what will be their feelings? It is in vain that we attempt to impose upon nature, for nature will have her course, and the religion that tortures all her social ties is a false religion.

After this detestable order, follows an account of the plunder taken, and the manner of dividing it; and here it is that the profaneness of priestly hypocrisy increases the catalogues of crimes. Verse 37, "*And the Lord's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen; and the beeves were thirty and six thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was threescore and twelve; and the asses were thirty thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was threescore and one; and the persons were thirty thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was thirty and two.*" In short, the matters contained in this chapter, as well as in

many other parts of the Bible, are too horrid for humanity to read, or for decency to hear; for it appears from the 35th verse of this chapter, that the number of women-children consigned to debauchery by the order of Moses was thirty-two thousand.

People in general know not what wickedness there is in this pretended word of God. Brought up in habits of superstition, they take it for granted, that the Bible is true, and that it is good; they permit themselves not to doubt of it; and they carry the ideas they form of the benevolence of the Almighty to the book which they have been taught to believe was written by his authority. Good heavens! it is quite another thing! it is a book of lies, wickedness, and blasphemy; for what can be greater blasphemy than to ascribe the wickedness of man to the orders of the Almighty?

But to return to my subject, that of shewing that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him, and that the Bible is spurious. The two instances I have already given would be sufficient, without any additional evidence, to invalidate the authenticity of any book that pretended to be four or five hundred years more ancient than the matters it speaks of, or refers to, as facts; for in the case of *pursuing them unto Dan*, and of the *kings that reigned over the children of Israel*, not even the flimsy pretence of prophecy can be pleaded. The expressions are in the preter tense, and it would be downright idiotism to say that a man could prophesy in the preter tense.

But there are many other passages scattered throughout those books, that unite in the same point of evidence. It is said in Exodus (another of the books ascribed to Moses), chap. xvi.

ver. 34, "And the children of Israel did eat manna, *until they came to a land inhabited*; they did eat manna *until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.*"

Whether the children of Israel eat manna or not, or what manna was, or whether it was any thing more than a kind of fungus, or small mushroom, or other vegetable substance, common to that part of the country, makes nothing to my argument; all that I mean to shew is, that it is not Moses that could write this account, because the account extends itself beyond the life and time of Moses. Moses, according to the Bible, (but it is such a book of lies and contradictions, there is no knowing which part to believe, or whether any,) died in the wilderness, and never came upon the borders of the land of Canaan; and consequently it could not be he, that said what the children of Israel did, or what they ate when they came there. This account of eating manna, which they tell us was written by Moses, extends itself to the time of Joshua, the successor of Moses; as appears by the account given in the book of Joshua, after the children of Israel had passed the river Jordan, and came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Joshua, chap. v. ver. 12, "*And the manna ceased on the morrow, after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*"

But a more remarkable instance than this occurs in Deuteronomy; which, while it shews that Moses could not be the writer of that book,

shews also the fabulous notions that prevailed at that time about giants. In the third chapter of Deuteronomy, among the conquests said to be made by Moses, is an account of the taking of Og, king of Bashan, verse 11. "For only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the race of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron, is it not in *Rabbath* of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man." A cubit is 1 foot $9\frac{888}{1000}$ inches. The length, therefore, of the bed was 10 feet 4 inches, and the breadth 7 feet 4 inches: thus much for this giant's bed. Now for the historical part, which, though the evidence is not so direct and positive as in the former cases, is nevertheless very presumable and corroborating evidence, and is better than the *best* evidence on the contrary side.

The writer, by way of proving the existence of this giant, refers to his bed, as to an *ancient relick*, and says, is it not in *Rabbath* (or *Rabbah*) of the children of Ammon? meaning, that it is; for such is frequently the Bible method of affirming a thing. But it could not be Moses that said this, because Moses could know nothing about *Rabbah*, nor of what was in it. *Rabbah* was not a city belonging to this giant king, nor was it one of the cities that Moses took. The knowledge, therefore, that this bed was at *Rabbah*, and of the particulars of it's dimensions, must be referred to the time when *Rabbah* was taken, and this was not till four hundred years after the death of Moses, for which see 2 Sam. chap. xii. ver. 26. "And Joab (David's

general) fought against *Rabbah of the children of Ammon*, and took the royal city.

As I am not undertaking to point out all the contradictions in time, place, and circumstance, that abound in the books ascribed to Moses, and which prove to a demonstration, that those books could not be written by Moses, nor in the time of Moses; I proceed to the book of Joshua, and to shew that Joshua is not the author of that book, and that it is anonymous, and without authority. The evidence I shall produce is contained in the book itself: I will not go out of the Bible for proof against the supposed authenticity of the Bible. False testimony is always good against itself.

Joshua, according to the first chapter of Joshua, was the immediate successor of Moses; he was moreover a military man, which Moses was not; and he continued as chief of the people of Israel twenty-five years; that is, from the time that Moses died, which, according to the Bible chronology, was 1451 years before Christ, until 1426 years before Christ, when, according to the same chronology, Joshua died. If therefore we find in this book, said to have been written by Joshua, references to *facts done* after the death of Joshua, it is evidence that Joshua could not be the author; and also that the book could not have been written till after the time of the latest fact which it records. As to the character of the book, it is horrid; it is a military history of rapine and murder; as savage and brutal, as those recorded of his predecessor in villainy and hypocrisy, Moses; and the blasphemy consists, as in the former books, in ascribing

those deeds to the orders of the Almighty.

In the first place, the book of Joshua, as is the case in the preceding books, is written in the third person; it is the historian of Joshua that speaks, for it would have been absurd and vain-glorious, that Joshua should say of himself, as is said of him in the last verse of the sixth chapter, that "*his fame was noised throughout all the country.*" I now come more immediately to the proof.

In the 24th chapter, ver. 31, it is said, "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and *all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua.*" Now in the name of common sense, can it be Joshua that relates what people had done after he was dead? This account must not only have been written by some historian that lived after Joshua, but that lived also after the elders that had out-lived Joshua.

There are several passages of a general meaning with respect to time, scattered throughout the book of Joshua, that carries the time in which the book was written to a distance from the time of Joshua, but without marking by exclusion any particular time, as in the passage above quoted. In that passage the time that intervened between the death of Joshua, and the death of the elders, is excluded descriptively and absolutely, and the evidence substantiates that the book could not have been written till after the death of the last.

But though the passages to which I allude, and which I am going to quote, do not designate any particular time by exclusion, they imply a time far more distant from the days of Joshua, than is contained between the

death of Joshua, and the death of the elders. Such is the passage, chap. x. ver. 14; where, after giving an account that the sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, at the command of Joshua, (a tale fit only to amuse children,) the passage says—"And there was no day like that, before it, nor *after it*, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man."

This tale of the sun standing still upon mount Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, is one of those fables which detects itself. Such a circumstance could not have happened without being known all over the world. One half would have wondered why the sun did not rise, and the other why it did not set; and the tradition of it would be universal; whereas there is not a nation in the world that knows any thing about it. But why must the moon stand still? What occasion could there be for moon-light in the day-time, and that too while the sun shined? As a poetical figure, the whole is well enough; it is akin to that in the song of Deborah and Baruk, *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*; but it is inferior to the figurative declaration of Mahomet, to the persons who came to expostulate with him on his goings on; *Wert thou*, said he, *to come to me with the sun in thy right hand, and the moon in thy left, it should not alter my career*. For Joshua to have exceeded Mahomet, he should have put the sun and moon one in each pocket, and carried them as Guy Faux carried his dark lantern, and taken them out to shine as he might happen to want them. The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related, that it is dif-

ficult to class them separately. One step above the sublime, makes the ridiculous; and one step above the ridiculous, makes the sublime again; the account, however, abstracted from the poetical fancy, shews the ignorance of Joshua, for he should have commanded the earth to have stood still.

The time implied by the expression *after it*, that is, after that day, being put in comparison with all the time that passed *before it*, must, in order to give any expressive signification to the passage, mean a *great length of time*:—for example, it would have been ridiculous to have said so the next day, or the next week, or the next month, or the next year; to give therefore meaning to the passage, comparative with the wonder it relates, and the prior time it alludes to, it must mean centuries of years, less however than one, would be trifling; and less than two would be barely admissible.

A distant but general time is also expressed in the 8th chapter, where, after giving an account of the taking the city of Ai, it is said, ver. 28, "And Joshua burned Ai, and made it an heap for ever, a desolation *unto this day*;" and again, ver. 29, where speaking of the king of Ai, whom Joshua had hanged, and buried at the entering of the gate, it is said, "And he raised thereon a great heap of stones, which remaineth *unto this day*," that is, unto the day or time in which the writer of the book of Joshua lived. And again, in the 10th chapter, where, after speaking of the five kings, whom Joshua had hanged on five trees, and then thrown in a cave, it is said, "And he laid great stones on the cave's mouth, which remain *unto this very day*."

In enumerating the several exploits of Joshua, and of the tribes, and of the places which they conquered or attempted, it is said, chap. xv. ver. 63, "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah *at Jerusalem unto this day.*" The question upon this passage is, At what time did the Jebusites and the children of Judah dwell together at Jerusalem? As this matter occurs again in the first chapter of Judges, I shall reserve my observations till I come to that part.

Having thus shewn from the book of Joshua itself, without any auxiliary evidence whatever, that Joshua is not the author of that Book, and that it is anonymous, and consequently without authority, I proceed, as before-mentioned, to the book of Judges.

The book of Judges is anonymous on the face of it; and therefore, even the pretence is wanting to call it the word of God; it has not so much as a nominal voucher; it is altogether fatherless.

This book begins with the same expression as the book of Joshua. That of Joshua begins, chap. i. ver. 1, *Now after the death of Moses, &c.* and this of Judges begins, *Now after the death of Joshua, &c.* This, and the similarity of style between the two books, indicate that they are the work of the same author; but who he was, is altogether unknown; the only point that the book proves is, that the author lived long after the time of Joshua; for though it begins as if it followed immediately after his death, the second chapter is an epitome or abstract of the whole book, which, according to the Bible chro-

nology, extends its history through a space of 306 years; that is, from the death of Joshua, 1426 years before Christ, to the death of Samson, 1120 years before Christ, and only 25 years before Saul went to seek his father's asses, and was made king. But there is good reason to believe, that it was not written till the time of David at least, and that the book of Joshua was not written before the same time.

In the first chapter of Judges, the writer, after announcing the death of Joshua, proceeds to tell what happened between the children of Judah and the native inhabitants of the land of Canaan. In this statement, the writer, having abruptly mentioned Jerusalem in the 7th verse, says immediately after, in the 8th verse, by way of explanation, "Now the children of Judah *had* fought against Jerusalem, and *taken* it;" consequently, this book could not have been written before Jerusalem had been taken. The readers will recollect the quotation I have just before made from the 15th chapter of Joshua, ver. 63, where it is said, that *the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem at this day*; meaning the time when the book of Joshua was written.

The evidence I have already produced, to prove that the books I have hitherto treated of, were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, nor till many years after their death, if such persons ever lived, is already so abundant, that I can afford to admit this passage with less weight than I am entitled to draw from it. For the case is, that so far as the Bible can be credited as an history, the city of Jerusalem was not taken till the time of David; and consequently, that the book of Joshua, and of Judg-

es, were not written till after the commencement of the reign of David, which was 370 years after the death of Joshua.

The name of the city that was afterwards called Jerusalem, was originally Jebus, or Jebusi, and was the capital of the Jebusites. The account of David's taking this city is given in 2 Samuel, chap. v. ver. 4, &c.; also in 1 Chron. chap. xiv. ver. 4, &c. There is no mention in any part of the Bible that it was ever taken before, nor any account that favours such an opinion. It is not said, either in Samuel or in Chronicles, that they *utterly destroyed men, women, and children; that they left not a soul to breathe*, as is said of their other conquests; and the silence here observed, implies that it was taken by capitulation, and that the Jebusites, the native inhabitants, continued to live in the place after it was taken. The account, therefore, given in Joshua, that *the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem at this day*, corresponds to no other time than after the taking of the city by David.

Having now shewn, that every book in the Bible, from Genesis to Judges, is without authenticity, I come to the book of Ruth, an idle, bungling story, foolishly told, nobody knows by whom, about a strolling country girl creeping slyly to bed to her cousin Boaz. Pretty stuff indeed to be called the word of God! It is, however, one of the best books in the Bible, for it is free from murder and rapine.

I come next to the two books of Samuel, and to shew that those books were not written by Samuel, nor till a great length of time after the death of Samuel; and that they are, like all

the former books, anonymous, and without authority.

To be convinced that these books have been written much later than the time of Samuel, and consequently not by him, it is only necessary to read the account which the writer gives of Saul going to seek his father's asses, and of his interview with Samuel, of whom Saul went to inquire about those lost asses, as foolish people now-a-days go to a conjurer to inquire after lost things.

The writer, in relating this story of Saul, Samuel, and the asses, does not tell it as a thing that had just then happened, but as a *story ancient in the time this writer lived*: for he tells it in the language or terms used at the time that *Samuel* lived, which obliges the writer to explain the story in the terms or language used in the time the *writer* lived.

Samuel, in the account given of him in the first of those books, chap. ix. is called *the seer*; and it is by this term that Saul inquires after him, ver. 11, "And as they (Saul and his servant) went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water; and they said unto them, *Is the seer here?*" Saul then went according to the direction of these maidens, and met Samuel without knowing him, and said to him, ver. 18, "Tell me, I pray thee, where the *seer's house* is?" and Samuel answered Saul, and said, *I am the seer.*"

As the writer of the book of Samuel relates these questions and answers, in the language or manner of speaking used in the time they are said to have been spoken; and as that manner of speaking was out of use when this author wrote, he found it necessary, in order to make the story

understood, to explain the terms in which these questions and answers are spoken; and he does this in the other verse, where he says, "*Before-time* in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet, was *before-time* called a seer." This proves, as I have before said, that this story of Saul, Samuel, and the asses, was an ancient story at the time the book of Samuel was written, and consequently that Samuel did not write it, and that that book is without authenticity.

But if we go further into those books, the evidence is still more positive that Samuel is not the writer of them; for they relate things that did not happen till several years after the death of Samuel. Samuel died before Saul; for the 1st of Samuel, chap. xxviii. tells, that Saul and the witch of Endor conjured Samuel up after he was dead; yet the history of matters contained in those books, is extended through the remaining part of Saul's life, and to the latter end of the life of David, who succeeded Saul. The account of the death and burial of Samuel (a thing which he could not write himself) is related in the 25th chapter of the first book of Samuel; and the chronology affixed to this chapter makes this to be 1060 years before Christ; yet the history of this *first* book is brought down to 1056 years before Christ, that is, to the death of Saul, which was not four years after the death of Samuel.

The second book of Samuel begins with an account of things that did not happen till four years after Samuel was dead; for it begins with the reign of David, who succeeded Saul, and it goes on to the end of David's reign, which was forty-three years

after the death of Samuel; and therefore the books are in themselves positive evidence that they were not written by Samuel.

I have now gone through all the books in the first part of the Bible, to which the names of persons are affixed, as being the authors of those books, and which the church, styling itself the Christian church, have imposed upon the world as the writings of Moses, Joshua, and Samuel; and I have detected and proved the falsehood of this imposition. And now, ye priests, of every description, who have preached and written against the former part of the *Age of Reason*, what have ye to say? Will ye, with all this mass of evidence against you, and staring you in the face, still have the assurance to march into your pulpits, and continue to impose these books on your congregations, as the works of *inspired penmen*, and the word of God? when it is as evident as demonstration can make truth appear, that the persons who, ye say, are the authors, are *not* the authors, and that ye know not who the authors are. What shadow of pretence have ye now to produce, for continuing the blasphemous fraud? What have ye still to offer against the pure and moral religion of deism, in support of your system of falsehood, idolatry, and pretended revelation? Had the cruel and murdering orders, with which the Bible is filled, and the numberless torturing executions of men, women, and children, in consequence of those orders, been ascribed to some friend, whose memory you revered, you would have glowed with satisfaction at detecting the falsehood of the charge, and gloried in defending his injured fame. It is because ye are sunk in the cruelty of superstition, or feel no interest

in the honour of your Creator, that ye listen to the horrid tales of the Bible, or hear them with callous indifference. The evidence I have produced, and shall still produce in the course of this work, to prove that the Bible is without authority, will, whilst it wounds the stubbornness of a priest, relieve and tranquillize the minds of millions : it will free them from all those hard thoughts of the Almighty, which priest-craft and the Bible had infused into their minds, and which stood in everlasting opposition to all their ideas of his moral justice and benevolence.

I come now to the two books of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles. Those books are altogether historical, and are chiefly confined to lives and actions of the Jewish kings, who in general were a parcel of rascals : but these are matters with which we have no more concern, than we have with the Roman emperors, or Homer's account of the Trojan war. Besides which, as those books are anonymous, and as we know nothing of the writer, or of his character, it is impossible for us to know what degree of credit to give to the matters related therein. Like all other ancient histories, they appear to be a jumble of fable and of fact, and of probable and of improbable things, but which distance of time and place, and change of circumstances in the world, have rendered obsolete and uninteresting.

The chief use I shall make of those books, will be that of comparing them with each other, and with other parts of the Bible, to shew the confusion, contradiction, and cruelty, in this pretended word of God.

The first book of Kings begins with the reign of Solomon, which, according to the Bible chronology, was 1015 years before Christ ; and the second book ends 588 years before Christ, being a little after the reign of Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, after taking Jerusalem, and conquering the Jews, carried captive to Babylon. The two books include a space of four hundred and twenty seven years.

The two books of Chronicles are an history of the same times, and in general of the same persons, by another author ; for it would be absurd to suppose that the same author wrote the history twice over. The first book of Chronicles (after giving the genealogy from Adam to Saul, which takes up the first nine chapters) begins with the reign of David ; and the last book ends, as in the last book of Kings, soon after the reign of Zedekiah, about 588 years before Christ. The two last verses of the last chapter bring the history fifty-two years more forward, that is, to 536. But these verses do not belong to the book, as I shall shew, when I come to speak of the book of Ezra.

The two books of Kings, besides the history of Saul, David, and Solomon, who reigned over *all* Israel, contain an abstract of the lives of seventeen kings and one queen, who are stiled kings of Judah ; and of nineteen, who are stiled kings of Israel ; for the Jewish nation, immediately on the death of Solomon, split into two parties, who chose separate kings, and who carried on most rancorous wars against each other.

Those two books are little more than a history of assassinations, trea-

chery, and wars. The cruelty that the Jews had accustomed themselves to practise on the Canaanites, whose country they had savagely invaded, under a pretended gift from God, they afterwards practised as furiously on each other. Scarcely half their kings died a natural death, and in some instances, whole families were destroyed to secure possession to the successor, who, after a few years, and sometimes only a few months, or less, shared the same fate. In the tenth chapter of the second book of Kings, an account is given of two baskets full of children's heads, 70 in number, being exposed at the entrance of the city; they were the children of Ahab, and were murdered by the orders of Jehu, whom Elisha, the pretended man of God, had anointed to be king over Israel, on purpose to commit this bloody deed, and assassinate his predecessor. And in the account of the reign of Manaham, one of the kings of Israel, who had murdered Shallum, who had reigned but one month, it is said, 2 Kings, chap. xv. ver. 16, that Manaham smote the city of Tiphshah, because they opened not the city to him, *and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.*

Could we permit ourselves to suppose that the Almighty would distinguish any nation of people by the name of *his chosen people*, we must suppose that people to have been an example to all the rest of the world of the purest piety and humanity, and not such a nation of ruffians and cut-throats as the ancient Jews were; a people, who, corrupted by, and copying after such monsters and impostors as Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, and David, had distinguished themselves above all others, on the

face of the known earth, for barbarity and wickedness. If we will not stubbornly shut our eyes, and steel our hearts, it is impossible not to see, in spite of all that long-established superstition imposes upon the mind, that the flattering appellation of *his chosen people* is no other than a *lie*, which the priests and leaders of the Jews had invented, to cover the baseness of their own characters; and which Christian priests, sometimes as corrupt, and often as cruel, have professed to believe.

The two books of Chronicles are a repetition of the same crimes; but the history is broken in several places, by the author leaving out the reign of some of their kings; and in this, as well as in that of Kings, there is such a frequent transition of kings of Judah, to kings of Israel, and from kings of Israel to kings of Judah, that the narrative is obscure in the reading. In the same book the history sometimes contradicts itself: for example, in the second book of Kings, chap. i. ver. 8. we are told, but in rather ambiguous terms, that after the death of Ahaziah, king of Israel, Jehoram, or Joram, (who was of the house of Ahab,) reigned in his stead in the *second year* of Jehoram, or Joram, son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah;—and in chap. viii. ver. 16, of the same book, it is said, and in the *fifth year* of Joram, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, began to reign; that is, one chapter says, that Joram of Judah, began to reign in the *second year* of Joram of Israel; and the other chapter says, that Joram of Israel began to reign in the *fifth year* of Joram of Judah.

Several of the most extraordinary matters related in one history, as having happened during the reign of such and such of their kings, are not to be found in the other in relating the reign of the same king: for example, the two first rival kings, after the death of Solomon, were Rehoboam and Jeroboam; and in 1 Kings, chap. xii. and xiii. an account is given of Jeroboam making an offering of burnt incense, and that a man, who is there called a man of God, cried out against the altar, chap. xiii. ver. 2, "O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places, that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."—Ver. 3, "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, *Lay hold on him*; and his hand which he put out against him, *dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.*"

One would think that such an extraordinary case as this, (which is spoken of as a judgment,) happening to the chief of one of the parties, and at the first moment of the separation of the Israelites into two nations, would, if it had been true, been recorded in both histories. But though men in late times have believed *all that the prophets have said unto them*, it does not appear, that those prophets, or historians, believed each other: they knew each other too well.

A long account also is given in Kings about Elijah. It runs through several chapters, and concludes with

telling, 2 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 11, "And it came to pass, as they (Elijah and Elisha) still went on, and talked, that behold there appeared *a chariot of fire, and horses of fire*, and parted both asunder, and Elijah *went up by a whirlwind to heaven.*" Hum! this the author of Chronicles, miraculous as the story is, makes no mention of, though he mentions Elijah by name; neither does he say any thing of the story related in the second chapter of the same book of Kings, of a parcel of children calling Elisha *bald head, bald head*; that this *man of God*, ver. 24, "turned back, and looked upon them, and *curst them in the name of the Lord*; and there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two children of them." He also passes over in silence the story told, 2 Kings, chap. xiii. that when they were burying a man in the sepulchre, where Elisha had been buried, it happened that the dead man, as they were letting him down, (ver. 21.) "touched the bones of Elisha, and he (the dead man) *revived, and stood up on his feet.*" The story does not tell us whether they buried the man, notwithstanding he revived and stood up on his feet, or drew him up again. Upon all these stories, the writer of Chronicles is as silent, as any writer of the present day, who did not chuse to be accused of *lying*, or at least of *romancing*, would be about stories of the same kind.

But, however these two historians may differ from each other, with respect to the tales related by either, they are silent alike with respect to these men stiled prophets, whose writings fill up the latter part of the Bible. Isaiah, who lived in the time of Hezekiah, is mentioned in Kings,

and again in Chronicles, when these historians are speaking of that reign; but, except in one or two instances at most, and those very slightly, none of the rest are so much as spoken of, or even their existence hinted at; though according to the Bible chronology, they lived within the time those histories were written; some of them long before. If those prophets, as they are called, were men of importance in their day, as the compilers of the Bible, and priests, and commentators, have since represented them to be, how can it be accounted for, that only one of these histories should say any thing about them?

The history in the books of Kings and of Chronicles is brought forward, as I have already said, to the year 885 before Christ: it will therefore be proper to examine, which of these prophets lived before that period.

Here follows a table of all the prophets, with the times in which they lived before Christ, according to the chronology affixed to the first chapter of each of the books of the prophets; and also of the number of years they lived before the books of Kings and Chronicles were written.

T A B L E.

Names.	Years before Christ.	Years before Kings and Chron.	Observations.
Isaiah	760	172	mentioned.
Jeremiah	629	41	{ mentioned only in the last chap. of Chron.
Ezekiel	595	7	not mentioned.
Daniel	607	19	not mentioned.
Hosea	785	97	not mentioned.
Joel	800	212	not mentioned.
Amos	789	199	not mentioned.
Obadiah	789	199	not mentioned.
Jonah	862	274	see the note. *
Micah	750	162	not mentioned.
Nahum	713	125	not mentioned.
Habakuk	626	38	not mentioned.
Zephaniah	630	42	not mentioned.
Haggai	after the year 588		
Zechariah			
Malachi			

This table is either not very honourable for the Bible historians, or not very honourable for the Bible prophets; and I leave to priests, and commentators, who are very learned in little things, to settle the point of *etiquette* between the two; and to assign a reason, why the authors of

* In Kings, chap. xiv. ver. 25, the name of Jonah is mentioned, on account of the restoration of a tract of land by Jeroboam; but nothing further of him is said, nor is any allusion made to the book of Jonah, nor to his expedition to Nineveh, nor to his encounter with the whale.

Kings and Chronicles have treated those prophets, whom, in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have considered as poets, with as much degrading silence as any historian of the present day would treat Peter Pindar.

I have one observation more to make on the book of Chronicles; after which I shall pass on to review the remaining books of the Bible.

In my observations on the book of Genesis, I have quoted a passage from the 36th chapter, ver. 31, which evidently refers to a time, *after* that kings began to reign over the children of Israel; and I have shewn, that as this verse is verbatim the same as in Chronicles, chap. i. ver. 43, where it stands consistently with the order of history, which in Genesis it does not, the verse in Genesis, and a great part of the 36th chapter, has been taken from Chronicles; and that the book of Genesis, though it is placed first in the Bible, and ascribed to Moses, has been manufactured by some unknown person, after the book of Chronicles was written, which was not until at least eight hundred and sixty years after the time of Moses.

The evidence I proceed by, to substantiate this, is regular, and has in it but two stages. First, I have already stated, that the passage in Genesis refers itself for *time* to Chronicles; secondly, that the book of Chronicles, to which this passage refers itself, was not *begun* to be written until at least eight hundred and sixty years after the time of Moses. To prove this, we have only to look into the thirteenth verse of the third chapter of the first book of Chronicles, where the writer, in giving the genealogy of the descendants of David, mentions *Zedekiah*: and it was in the

time of *Zedekiah* that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, 588 years before Christ, and consequently more than 860 years after Moses. Those who have superstitiously boasted of the antiquity of the Bible, and particularly of the books ascribed to Moses, have done it without examination, and without any other authority than that of one credulous man telling it to another; for, so far as historical and chronological evidence applies, the very first book in the Bible is not so ancient as the book of Homer, by more than three hundred years, and is about the same age with *Æsop's Fables*.

I am not contending for the morality of Homer; on the contrary, I think it a book of false glory, tending to inspire immoral and mischievous notions of honour; and with respect to *Æsop*, though the moral is in general just, the fable is often cruel; and the cruelty of the fable does more injury to the heart, especially in a child, than the moral does good to the judgment.

Having now dismissed Kings and Chronicles, I come to the next in course, the book of Ezra.

As one proof, among others I shall produce, to shew the disorder in which this pretended word of God, the Bible, has been put together, and the uncertainty who the authors were, we have only to look at the three first verses in Ezra, and the two last in Chronicles; for by what kind of cutting and shuffling has it been, that the three first verses in Ezra should be the two last verses in Chronicles, or that the two last in Chronicles should be the three first in Ezra? Either the authors did not know their own works, or the compilers did not know the authors.

Two last Verses of Chronicles.

Ver. 22. Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord, spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

23. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

The last verse in Chronicles is broken abruptly, and ends in the middle of a phrase with the word *up*, without signifying to what place. This abrupt break, and the appearance of the same verses in different books, shew, as I

Three first Verses of Ezra.

Ver. 1. Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem.

have already said, the disorder and ignorance in which the Bible has been put together, and that the compilers of it had no authority for what they were doing, nor we any authority for believing what they have done.*

* I observed, as I passed along, several broken and senseless passages in the Bible, without thinking them of consequence enough to be introduced in the body of the work; such as that, 1 Samuel, chap. xiii. ver. 1, where it is said, "Saul reigned *one year*"; and when he had reigned *two* years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men, &c. The first part of the verse, that Saul reigned *one year*, has no sense, since it does not tell us what Saul did, nor says any thing of what happened at the end of *that one year*; and it is, besides, mere absurdity to say he reigned *one year*, when the very next phrase says he had reigned *two*; for if he had reigned *two*, it was impossible not to have reigned *one*.

Another instance occurs in Joshua, chap. v. where the writer tells us a story of an angel (for such the table of contents, at the head of the chapter, calls him) appearing unto Joshua; and the story ends abruptly, and without any conclusion. The story is as follows:—Verse 13, "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold there stood a man over-against him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went up to him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" Verse 14, "And he said, Nay; but as captain of the hosts of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, *What saith my Lord unto his servant?*" Verse 15, "And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."—And what then? nothing: for here the story ends, and the chapter too.

Either this story is broken off in the middle, or it is a story told by some Jewish humourist, in ridicule of Joshua's pretended mission from God; and the compilers of the Bible, not perceiving the design of the story, have told it as a serious matter.

As

certainly can there be in the Bible for any thing?

Nehemiah, in like manner, gives a list of the returned families, and of the number of each family. He begins as in Ezra, by saying, chap. vii. ver. 8, "The children of Parosh, two thousand three hundred and seventy-two;" and so on through all the families. This list differs in several of the particulars from that of Ezra. In the 66th verse, Nehemiah makes a total, and says, as Ezra had said, "The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and three-score." But the particulars of this list make a total but of 31,089, so that the error here is 11,271. These writers may do well enough for Bible makers, but not for any thing where truth and exactness are necessary.

The next book in course is the book of Esther. If Madam Esther thought it any honour to offer herself as a kept mistress to Ahasuerus, or as a rival to queen Vashti, who had refused to come to a drunken king, in the midst of a drunken company, to be made a shew of, (for the account says, they had been drinking seven days, and were merry,) let Esther and Mordecai look to that, it is no business of our's, at least it is none of mine; besides which, the story has a great deal the appearance of being fabulous, and is also anonymous. I pass on to the book of Job.

The book of Job differs in character from all the books we have hitherto passed over. Treachery and murder make no part of this book; it is full of the meditations of a mind strongly impressed with the vicissitudes of human life; and by turns sinking under, and struggling against the

pressure. It is a highly wrought composition, between willing submission and involuntary discontent; and shews man, as he sometimes is, more disposed to be resigned than he is capable of being. Patience has but a small share in the character of the person of whom the book treats; on the contrary, his grief is often impetuous; but he still endeavours to keep a guard upon it, and seems determined, in the midst of accumulating ills, to impose upon himself the hard duty of contentment.

I have spoken in a respectful manner of the book of Job in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, but without knowing at that time what I have learned since; which is, that from all the evidence that can be collected, the book of Job does not belong to the Bible.

I have seen the opinion of two Hebrew commentators, Abenezra and Spinoza, upon this subject; they both say that the book of Job carries no internal evidence of being an Hebrew book; that the genius of the composition, and the drama of the piece, are not Hebrew; that it has been translated from another language into Hebrew, and that the author of the book was a Gentile; that the character represented under the name of Satan (which is the first and only time this name is mentioned in the Bible) does not correspond to any Hebrew idea; and that the two convocations which the Deity is supposed to have made of those, whom the poem calls sons of God, and the familiarity which this supposed Satan is stated to have with the Deity, are in the same case.

It may also be observed, that the book shews itself to be the production of a mind cultivated in science, which

the Jews, so far from being famous for, were very ignorant of. The allusions to objects of natural philosophy are frequent and strong, and are of a different cast to any thing in the books known to be Hebrew. The astronomical names Pleiades, Orion, and Arcturus, are Greek, and not Hebrew names; and as it does not appear from any thing that is to be found in the Bible, that the Jews knew any thing of astronomy, or that they studied it, they had no translation for those names into their own language, but adopted the names as they found them in the poem.

That the Jews did translate the literary productions of the Gentile nations into the Hebrew language, and mix them with their own, is not a matter of doubt; the first chapter of Proverbs is an evidence of this: it is there said, ver. 1, *The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him.* This verse stands as a preface to the proverbs that follow, and which are not the proverbs of Solomon, but of Lemuel; and this Lemuel was not one of the kings of Israel, nor of Judah, but of some other country, and consequently a Gentile. The Jews, however, have adopted his proverbs; and as they cannot give any account who the au-

thor of the book of Job was, nor how they came by the book; and as it differs in character from the Hebrew writings, and stands totally unconnected with every other book and chapter in the Bible before it, and after it, it has all the circumstantial evidence of being originally a book of the Gentiles.*

The Bible-makers, and those regulators of time, the Bible chronologists, appear to have been at a loss where to place, and how to dispose of the book of Job; for it contains no one historical circumstance, nor allusion to any, that might serve to determine its place in the Bible. But it would not have answered the purpose of these men to have informed the world of their ignorance; and therefore they have affixed to it the æra of 1520 years before Christ, which is during the time the Israelites were in Egypt, and for which they have just as much authority as I should have for saying it was a thousand years before that period. The probability, however, is, that it is older than any book in the Bible; and it is the only one that can be read without indignation or disgust.

We know nothing of what the ancient gentile world (as it is called) was before the time of the Jews, whose

* The prayer known by the name of *Agur's prayer*, in the 30th chapter of Proverbs, immediately preceding the proverbs of Lemuel, and which is the only sensible, well-conceived, and well-expressed prayer in the Bible, has much the appearance of being a prayer taken from the Gentiles. The name of Agur occurs on no other occasion than this; and he is introduced, together with the prayer ascribed to him, in the same manner, and nearly in the same words, that Lemuel and his proverbs are introduced in the chapter that follows. The first verse of the 30th chapter says, "The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy:" here the word prophecy is used with the same application it has in the following chapter of Lemuel, unconnected with any thing of prediction. The prayer of Agur is in the 8th and 9th verse, "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither riches nor poverty, but feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny thee, and say, *Who is the Lord?* or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." This has not any of the marks of being a Jewish prayer; for the Jews never prayed but when they were in trouble, and never for any thing but victory, vengeance, or riches.

practice has been to calumniate and blacken the character of all other nations; and it is from the Jewish accounts that we have learned to call them heathens. But as far as we know to the contrary, they were a just and a moral people, and not addicted, like the Jews, to cruelty and revenge, but of whose profession of faith we are unacquainted. It appears to have been their custom to personify both virtue and vice, by statues and images, as is done now-a-days both by statuary and by painting; but it does not follow from this, that they worshipped them any more than we do. I pass on to the book of

Psalms, of which it is not necessary to make much observation. Some of them are moral, and others are very revengeful, and the greater part relates to certain local circumstances of the Jewish nation at the time they were written, with which we have nothing to do. It is, however, an error, or an imposition, to call them the *Psalms of David*; they are a collection, as song-books are now-a-days, from different song-writers, who lived at different times. The 137th Psalm could not have been written till more than four hundred years after the time of David, because it is written in commemoration of an event, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, which did not happen till that distance of time. "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midst thereof; for there they that carried us away captive, required of us a song, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion." As a man would say to an American, or to a Frenchman, or to an Englishman, Sing us one of your American songs,

or your French songs, or your English songs. This remark, with respect to the time this psalm was written, is of no other use than to shew (among others already mentioned) the general imposition the world has been under, with respect to the authors of the Bible. No regard has been paid to time, place, and circumstance; and the names of persons have been affixed to the several books; which it was as impossible they should write, as that a man should walk in procession at his own funeral.

The book of Proverbs. These, like the *Psalms*, are a collection, and that from authors belonging to other nations than those of the Jewish nation, as I have shewn in the observations upon the book of Job: besides which, some of the proverbs ascribed to Solomon, did not appear till two hundred and fifty years after the death of Solomon; for it is said in the first verse of the 25th chapter, "*These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.*" It was two hundred and fifty years from the time of Solomon to the time of Hezekiah. When a man is famous, and his name is abroad, he is made the putative father of things he never said or did; and this most probably has been the fashion of that day, to make proverbs, as it is now to make jest-books, and father them upon those who never saw them.

The book of *Ecclesiastes*, or the *Preacher*, is also ascribed to Solomon, and that with much reason, if not with truth. It is written as the solitary reflections of a worn-out debauchee, such as Solomon was, who looking back on scenes he can no longer enjoy, cries out, *All is vanity!* A great deal of the metaphor and of the sentiment is obscure, most probably by

translation; but enough is left to shew they were strongly pointed in the original.* From what is transmitted to us of the character of Solomon, he was witty, ostentatious, dissolute, and at last melancholy: he lived fast, and died, tired of the world, at the age of fifty-eight years.

Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, are worse than none; and however it may carry with it the appearance of heightened enjoyment, it defeats all the felicity of affection, by leaving it no point to fix upon; divided love is never happy. This was the case with Solomon; and if he could not, with all his pretensions to wisdom, discover it before-hand, he merited, unpitied, the mortification he afterwards endured. In this point of view, his preaching is unnecessary, because, to know the consequences, it is only necessary to know the case. Seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, would have stood in place of the whole book. It was needless after this to say, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit; for it is impossible to derive happiness from the company of those whom we deprive of happiness.

To be happy in old age, it is necessary that we accustom ourselves to objects that can accompany the mind all the way through life, and that we take the rest as good in their day. The mere man of pleasure is miserable in old age; and the mere drudge in business is but little better: whereas, natural philosophy, mathematical and mechanical sciences, are a continual source of tranquil pleasure, and in spite of the gloomy dogma of priests, and of superstition, the study of those

things is the study of the true theology; it teaches man to know and to admire the Creator, for the principles of science are in the creation, are unchangeable, and of divine origin.

Those who knew Benjamin Franklin, will recollect, that his mind was ever young; his temper ever serene; science, that never grows grey, was always his mistress. Without an object, we become like an invalid in an hospital waiting for death.

Solomon's Songs are amorous and foolish enough, but which wrinkled fanaticism has called divine. The compilers of the Bible have placed these songs after the book of Ecclesiastes; and the chronologists have affixed to them the æra of 1014 years before Christ, at which time Solomon, according to the same chronology, was nineteen years of age, and was then forming his seraglio of wives and concubines. The Bible-makers and the chronologists should have managed this matter a little better, and either have said nothing about the time, or chosen a time less inconsistent with the supposed divinity of those songs; for Solomon was then in the honeymoon of one thousand debaucheries.

It should also have occurred to them, that as he wrote, if he did write, the book of Ecclesiastes, long after these songs, and in which he exclaims, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit; that he included those songs in that description. This is the more probable, because he says, or somebody for him, Ecclesiastes, chap. ii. ver. 8, "*I got me men-singers and women-singers, (most probably to sing those songs) and musical instruments of all*

* *Those that look out of the window shall be darkened,* is an obscure figure translation for loss of sight.

songs; and behold (ver. 11.) all was vanity and vexation of spirit." The compilers, however, have done their work but by halves; for as they have given us the songs, they should have given us the tunes, that we might sing them.

Those books, called the books of the Prophets, fill up all the remaining part of the Bible; they are sixteen in number, beginning with Isaiah, and ending with Malachi, of which I have given a list, in the observations upon Chronicles. Of these sixteen prophets, all of whom, except the three last, lived within the time the books of Kings and Chronicles were written; two only, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are mentioned in the history of those books. I shall leave the character of the men called prophets, to another part of the work.

Whoever will take the trouble of reading the book ascribed to Isaiah, will find it one of the most wild and disorderly compositions ever put together; it has neither beginning, middle, nor end; and except a short historical part, and a few sketches of history in two or three of the first chapters, is one continued, incoherent, bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning; a school-boy would scarcely have been excusable for writing such stuff; it is (at least in translation) that kind of composition and false taste, that is properly called prose run mad.

The historical part begins at the 36th chapter, and is continued to the end of the 39th chapter. It relates some matters that are said to have passed during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, at which time Isaiah lived. This fragment of history be-

gins and ends abruptly: it has not the least connection with the chapter that precedes it, nor with that which follows it, nor with any other in the book. It is probable, that Isaiah wrote this fragment himself, because he was an actor in the circumstances it treats of; but except this part, there are scarcely two chapters that have any connection with each other; one is entitled, at the beginning of the first verse; the burden of Babylon; another, the burden of Moab; another, the burden of Damascus; another, the burden of Egypt; another, the burden of the Desert of the Sea; another, the burden of the Valley of Vision; as you would say, the story of the knight, of the burning mountain, the story of Cinderella, or the Wood, &c. &c.

I have already shewn in the instance of the two last verses of Chronicles, and the three first in Ezra, that the compilers of the Bible mixed and confounded the writings of different authors with each other; which alone, were there no other cause, is sufficient to destroy the authenticity of any compilation, because it is more than presumptive evidence, that the compilers are ignorant who the authors were. A very glaring instance of this occurs in the book ascribed to Isaiah: the latter part of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th, so far from having been written by Isaiah, could only have been written by some person, who lived at least an hundred and fifty years after Isaiah was dead.

These chapters are a compliment to *Cyrus*, who permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity, to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, as is stated in Ezra.

The last verse of the 44th chapter, and the beginning of the 45th, are in the following words: "*That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid; thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right-hand I have holden to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, &c.*"

What audacity of church, and priestly ignorance, is it to impose this book upon the world, as the writing of Isaiah! when Isaiah, according to their own chronology, died soon after the death of Hezekiah, which was six hundred and ninety-eight years before Christ; and the decree of Cyrus, in favour of the Jews returning to Jerusalem, was, according to the same chronology, 536 years before Christ; which is a distance of time, between the two, of one hundred and sixty-two years. I do not suppose, that the compilers of the Bible made these books; but rather that they picked up some loose, anonymous essays, and put them together, under the names of such authors, as best suited their purpose. They have encouraged the imposition, which is next to inventing it; for it was impossible but they must have observed it.

When we see the studied craft of the scripture-makers, in making every part of this romantic book of school-boy's eloquence, bend to the monstrous idea of a Son of God, begotten by a ghost on the body of a virgin, there is no imposition; we are not justified in suspecting them of it. Every phrase and circumstance are marked

with the barbarous hand of superstitious torture, and forced into meanings it was impossible they could have. The head of every chapter, and the top of every page, are blazoned with the names of Christ and the church; that the unwary reader might suck in the error before he began to read.

Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 14, has been interpreted to mean the person, called Jesus Christ, and his mother Mary, and has been echoed through christendom for more than a thousand years; and such has been the rage of this opinion, that scarcely a spot in it, but has been stained with blood, and marked with desolation, in consequence of it. Though it is not my intention to enter into controversy on subjects of this kind, but to confine myself to shew that the Bible is spurious; and thus, by taking away the foundation, to overthrow at once the whole structure of superstition raised thereon; I will, however, stop a moment to expose the fallacious application of this passage.

Whether Isaiah was playing a trick with Ahaz, king of Judah, to whom this passage is spoken, is no business of mine; I mean only to shew the misapplication of the passage, and that it has no more reference to Christ and his mother, than it has to me and my mother. The story is simply this:

The king of Syria and the king of Israel (I have already mentioned, that the Jews were split into two nations, one of which was called Judah, the capital of which was Jerusalem, and the other Israel) made war jointly against Ahaz, king of Judah, and marched their armies towards Jerusalem. Ahaz and his people became

alarmed, and the account says, ver. 2, "*Their hearts were moved, as the trees of wood are moved with the wind.*"

In this situation of things, Isaiah addresses himself to Ahaz, and assures him in the *name of the Lord*, (the cant phrase of all the prophets,) that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to satisfy Ahaz that this should be the case, tells him to ask a sign. This, the account says, Ahaz declined doing, giving as a reason, that he would not tempt the Lord; upon which, Isaiah, who is the speaker, says, ver. 14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; *behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son*; and the 16th verse says, "*And before this child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land which thou abhorrest or darest* (meaning Syria and the kingdom of Israel) *shall be forsaken of both her kings.*" Here then was the sign, and the time limited for the completion of the assurance or promise; namely, before this child should know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

Isaiah having committed himself thus far, it became necessary to him, in order to avoid the imputation of being a false prophet, and the consequence thereof, to take measures to make this sign appear. It certainly was not a difficult thing, in any time of the world, to find a girl with child, or to make her so; and perhaps Isaiah knew of one beforehand; for I do not suppose that the prophets of that day were any more to be trusted, than the priests of this:

be that however as it may, he says in the next chapter, ver. 2, "And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, and *I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son.*"

Here then is the whole story, foolish as it is, of this child and this virgin; and it is upon the barefaced perversion of this story, that the book of Matthew, and the impudence, and sordid interest of priests in later times, have founded a theory, which they call the gospel; and have applied this story to signify the person they call Jesus Christ; begotten, they say, by a ghost, whom they call holy, on the body of a woman engaged in marriage and afterwards married, whom they call a virgin seven hundred years after this foolish story was told; a theory, which, speaking for myself, I hesitate not to believe, and to say, is as fabulous, and as false as God is true*.

But to shew the imposition and falshood of Isaiah, we have only to attend to the sequel of this story; which, though it is passed over in silence in the book of Isaiah, is related in the 28th chapter of 2 Chronicles; and which is, that instead of these two kings failing in their attempt against Ahaz, king of Judah, as Isaiah had pretended to foretel in the name of the Lord, they *succeeded*; Ahaz was defeated and destroyed; an hundred and twenty thousand of his people were slaughtered; Jerusalem was plundered; and two hundred thousand women, and sons, and daughters, carried into captivity. Thus much for this lying

* In the 14th verse of the chapter, it is said, that the child should be called Immanuel; but this name was not given to either of the children, otherwise than as a character, which the word signifies. That of the prophet was called Maher-shalal-hash-baz, and that of Mary was called Jesus.

prophet and impostor Isaiah, and the book of falsehoods, that bears his name. I pass on to the book of

Jeremiah. This prophet, as he is called, lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, in the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah; and the suspicion was strong against him, that he was a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar. Every thing relating to Jeremiah shews him to have been a man of an equivocal character; in his metaphor of the potter and the clay, chap. xviii. he guards his prognostications in such a crafty manner, as always to leave himself a door to escape by, in case the event should be contrary to what he had predicted.

In the 7th and 8th verses of that chapter, he makes the Almighty to say, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and destroy it, if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent me of the evil that I thought to do unto them. Here was a proviso against one side of the case: now for the other side.

Verses 9 and 10, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice; then *I will repent me of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.*" Here is a proviso against the other side; and according to this plan of prophesying, a prophet could never be wrong, however mistaken the Almighty might be. This sort of absurd subterfuge, and this manner of speaking of the Almighty, as one would speak of a man, is consistent with nothing but the stupidity of the Bible.

As to the authenticity of the book, it is only necessary to read it in order to decide positively, that, though some passages recorded therein may have been spoken by Jeremiah, he is not the author of the book. The historical parts, if they can be called by that name, are in the most confused condition; the same events are several times repeated, and that in a manner different, and sometimes in contradiction to each other; and this disorder runs even to the last chapter, where the history, upon which the greater part of the book has been employed, begins a-new, and ends abruptly. The book has all the appearance of being a medley of unconnected anecdotes, respecting persons and things of that time, collected together in the same rude manner, as if the various and contradictory accounts, that are to be found in a bundle of newspapers, respecting persons and things of the present day, were put together without date, order, or explanation. I will give two or three examples of this kind.

It appears from the account of the 37th chapter, that the army of Nebuchadnezzar, which is called the army of the Chaldeans, had besieged Jerusalem some time; and on their hearing, that the army of Pharaoh, of Egypt, was marching against them, they raised the siege, and retreated for a time. It may here be proper to mention, in order to understand this confused history, that Nebuchadnezzar had besieged and taken Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim, the predecessor of Zedekiah; and that it was Nebuchadnezzar who had made Zedekiah king, or rather vice-roy; and that this second siege, of which the book of Jeremiah treats, was in consequence of the revolt of Zedekiah

against Nebuchadnezzar. This will, in some measure, account for the suspicion that affixes itself to Jeremiah, of being a traitor, and in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar; whom Jeremiah calls in the 43d chapter, ver. 10, the servant of God.

The 11th verse of this chapter (the 37th) says, "And it came to pass, that, when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem, for fear of Pharaoh's army, then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem, to go (as this account states) into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people: and when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose name was Irijah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, *Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans*: then Jeremiah said, *It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans*. Jeremiah being thus stopt and accused, was, after being examined, committed to prison, on suspicion of being a traitor; where he remained, as is stated in the last verse of this chapter.

But the next chapter gives an account of the imprisonment of Jeremiah, which has no connection with *this* account; but ascribes his imprisonment to another circumstance, and for which we must go back to the 21st chapter. It is there stated, verse 1, that Zedekiah sent Pashur, the son of Maichiah, and Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah the priest, to Jeremiah, to inquire of him concerning Nebuchadnezzar, whose army was then before Jerusalem: and Jeremiah said to them, verse 8, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death: he that abideth in this city, shall die by the sword and by the famine, and by the pesti-

lence; *but he that goeth out and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey.*"

This interview and conference breaks off abruptly at the end of the 10th verse of the 21st chapter; and such is the disorder of this book, that we have to pass over sixteen chapters upon various subjects, in order to come at the continuation and event of this conference; and this brings us to the 1st verse of the 38th chapter, as I have just mentioned.

The 38th chapter opens with saying, "Then Shaphatiah, the son of Mattan; and Gedaliah, the son of Pashur; and Jucal, the son of Shelemiah; and Pashur, the son of Malchiah; (here are more persons mentioned, than in the 21st chapter) heard the words that Jeremiah spoke unto the people, saying, *Thus saith the Lord, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans, shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live*; (which are the words of the conference;) therefore, (say they to Zedekiah,) We beseech thee, let this man be put to death; *for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people in speaking such words unto them; for this man seeketh not the welfare of the people, but the hurt*:" and at the 6th verse, it is said, "Then they took Jeremiah, and put him into a dungeon of Malchiah."

These two accounts are different and contradictory. The one ascribes his imprisonment to his attempt to *escape out of the city*; the other, to his *preaching and prophesying in the city*: the one, to his being seized by the

guard at the gate ; the other, to his being accused before Zedekiah, by the conferees.*

In the next chapter (the 39th) we have another instance of the disordered state of this book ; for, notwithstanding the siege of the city, by Nebuchadnezzar, has been the subject of several of the preceding chapters, particularly the 37th and 38th, the 39th chapter begins as if not a word had been said upon the subject ; and as if the reader was still to be informed of every particular respecting it ; for it begins with saying, verse 1st, "*In the ninth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it, &c. &c.*"

But the instance in the last chapter (the 52d) is still more glaring ; for, though the story has been told over and

over again, this chapter still supposes the reader not to know any thing of it ; for it begins by saying, verse 1st, "*Zedekiah was one and twenty years old, when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem ; and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (Ver. 4.) And it came to pass, in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, &c. &c.*"

It is not possible that any one man, and more particularly Jeremiah, could have been the writer of this book. The errors are such, as could not have been committed by any person sitting down to compose a work. Were I, or any other man, to write in such a disordered manner, no body would read what was written ; and every body would suppose, that the writer

* I observed two chapters, 16th and 17th, in the first book of Samuel, that contradict each other with respect to David, and the manner he became acquainted with Saul ; as the 37th and 38th chapters of the book of Jeremiah contradict each other with respect to the cause of Jeremiah's imprisonment.

In the 16th chapter of Samuel, it is said, that an evil spirit from God troubled Saul, and that his servants advised him (as a remedy) "to seek out a man, who was a cunning player upon the harp:" and Saul said, verse 17, "Provide now a man that can play well, and bring him unto me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him : wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son. And (verse 21) David came to Saul, and stood before him, and he loved him greatly ; and he became his armour-bearer : and when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul. (verse 23) David took his harp, and played with his hand, and Saul was refreshed, and was well."

But the next chapter (17th) gives an account, all different to this, of the manner that Saul and David became acquainted. Here it is ascribed to David's encounter with Goliath, when David was sent by his father to carry provision to his brethren in the camp. In the 55th verse of this chapter, it is said, "And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine (Goliath), he said to Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son is this youth ? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is. And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand ; and Saul said unto him, Whose son art thou, thou young man ? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite." These two accounts belie each other, because each of them supposes Saul and David not to have known each other before. This book, the Bible, is too ridiculous even for criticism.

was in a state of insanity. The only way therefore to account for the disorder is, that the book is a medley of detached unauthenticated anecdotes, put together by some stupid book-maker, under the name of Jeremiah; because many of them refer to him, and to the circumstances of the times he lived in.

Of the duplicity, and of the false prediction of Jeremiah, I shall mention two instances; and then proceed to review the remainder of the Bible.

It appears from the 38th chapter, that when Jeremiah was in prison, Zedekiah sent for him; and at this interview, which was private, Jeremiah pressed it strongly on Zedekiah to surrender himself to the enemy. "If, says he, verse 17, *thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, &c.*" Zedekiah was apprehensive, that what passed at this conference should be known; and he said to Jeremiah, verse 25, "If the princes (meaning those of Judah) hear, that I have talked with thee; and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now, what thou hast said unto the king; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; and also what the king said unto thee: then thou shalt say unto them, I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there. Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him; and *he told them according to all the words the king had commanded.*" Thus, this man of God, as he is called, could tell a lie, or very strongly prevaricate, when he supposed it would answer his purpose: for certainly he did not go to Zedekiah, to make his supplication; nei-

ther did he make it: he went, because he was sent for; and he employed that opportunity, to advise Zedekiah to surrender himself to Nebuchadnezzar.

In the 34th chapter is a prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah in these words, ver. 2, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will burn it with fire; and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but thou shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. *Yet hear the word of the Lord; O Zedekiah, king of Judah, thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee, and will lament thee, saying, Ah, lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord.*"

Now, instead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the king of Babylon, and speaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying in peace, and with the burning of odours, as at the funeral of his fathers (as Jeremiah had declared, the Lord himself had pronounced), the reverse, according to the 52d chapter, was the case: it is there said, ver. 10, "That the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death." What then can we say of these prophets, but that they are impostors and liars?

As for Jeremiah, he pronounced none of those evils. He was taken

into favour by Nebuchadnezzar, who gave him in charge to the captain of the guard, chap. xxxix. ver. 12, "Take him (said he), and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee." Jeremiah joined himself afterwards to Nebuchadnezzar, and went about prophesying for him against the Egyptians, who had marched to the relief of Jerusalem while it was besieged. Thus much for another of the lying prophets, and the book that bears his name.

I have been the more particular in treating of the books ascribed to Isaiah and Jeremiah, because those two are spoken of in the books of Kings and Chronicles, whilst the others are not. The remainder of the books ascribed to the men called prophets, I shall not trouble myself much about, but take them collectively into the observations I shall offer on the character of the men called prophets.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have said that the word prophet was the Bible-word for poet, and that the flights and metaphors of the Jewish poets have been foolishly erected into what are now called prophecies. I am sufficiently justified in this opinion, not only because the books called the prophecies are written in poetical language, but because there is no word in the Bible, except it be the word prophet, that describes what we mean by poet. I have also said, that the word signified a performer upon musical instruments, of which I

have given some instances; such as that of a company of prophets, prophesying with psalteries, with tabrets, with pipes, with harps, &c. and Saul prophesied with them, 1 Sam. chap. x. ver. 5. It appears from this passage, and from other parts in the book of Samuel, that the word prophet was confined to signify poetry and music; for the person, who was supposed to have a visionary insight into things concealed, was not a prophet, but a *seer*,* 1 Sam. chap. ix. ver. 9; and it was not till after the word *seer* went out of use, (which was, most probably, when Saul banished those he called wizards,) that the profession of the seer, or the art of seeing, became incorporated into the word prophet.

According to the *modern* meaning of the word prophet and prophesying, it signifies foretelling events to a great distance of time; and it became necessary to the inventors of the gospel to give it this latitude of meaning, in order to apply, or to stretch what they call the prophecies of the Old Testament, to the times of the New. But according to the Old Testament, the prophesying of the seer, and afterwards of the prophet, so far as the meaning of the word seer was incorporated into that of prophet, had reference only to things of the time then passing, or very closely connected with it; such as the event of a battle they were going to engage in, or of a journey, or of an enterprize they were going to undertake, or of any circumstance then pending, or of any difficulty they were then in;

* I know not what is the Hebrew word that corresponds to the word seer in English: but I observe it is translated into French by *Le Voyant*, from the verb *voir* to see, and which means the person who sees, or the seer.

all of which had immediate reference to themselves, (as in the case already mentioned of Ahaz and Isaiah with respect to the expression, *Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,*) and not to any distant future time. It was that kind of prophesying, that corresponds to what we call fortune-telling; such as casting nativities, predicting riches, fortunate or unfortunate marriages, conjuring for lost goods, &c. and it is the fraud of the Christian church, not that of the Jews, and the ignorance and the superstition of modern, not that of ancient times, that elevated those poetical—musical—conjuring—dreaming—strolling gentry, into the rank they have since had.

But besides this general character of all the prophets, they had a particular character. They were in parties, and they prophesied for, or against, according to the party they were with, as the poetical and political writers of the present day write in defence of the party they associate with, against the other.

After the Jews were divided into two nations, that of Judah and that of Israel, each party had its prophets, who abused and accused each other of being false prophets, lying prophets, impostors, &c.

The prophets of the party of Judah prophesied against the prophets of the party of Israel; and those of the party of Israel against those of Judah. This party prophesying shewed itself immediately on the separation of the first two rival kings, Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The prophet that cursed, or prophesied against the altar, that Jeroboam had built in Bethel, was of the party of Judah, where Rehoboam was king; and he was way-laid on

his return home by a prophet of the party of Israel, who said unto him, (1 Kings, chap. xiii.) "*Art thou the man of God that came from Judah?*" and he said, *I am.*" Then the prophet of the party of Israel said unto him, "*I am a prophet also as thou art,* (signifying of Judah,) *and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee unto thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water: but,* says the 18th verse, *he lied unto him.*" The event, however, according to the story, is, the prophet of Judah never got back to Judah; for he was found dead on the road by the contrivance of the prophet of Israel, who no doubt was called a true prophet by his own party, and the prophet of Judah a lying prophet.

In the third chapter of the second of Kings, a story is related of prophesying, or conjuring, that shews, in several particulars, the character of a prophet. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and Jerom, king of Israel, had for a while ceased their party animosity, and entered into an alliance; and those two, together with the king of Edom, engaged in a war against the king of Moab. After uniting, and marching their armies, the story says, they were in great distress for water, upon which Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?*" and one of the servants of the king of Israel said, *Here is Elisha.* (Elisha was of the party of Judah.) *And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah said, The word of the Lord is with him.*" The story then says, these three kings went down to Elisha; and when Elisha (who, as I have said, was a Judahmite prophet) saw the

king of Israel, he said unto him, "*What have I to do with thee, get thee to the prophets of thy father, and the prophets of thy mother. Nay, but said the king of Israel, the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of the king of Moab*" (meaning, because of the distress they were in for water); upon which Elisha said, "*As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.*" Here is all the venom and vulgarity of a party prophet. We have now to see the performance or manner of prophesying.

Ver. 15, "*Bring me,* said Elisha, *a minstrel; and it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.*" Here is the farce of the conjurer. Now for the prophecy: "*And Elisha said, (singing, most probably, to the tune he was playing,) Thus saith the Lord, make this valley full of ditches;*" which was just telling them what every countryman might have told them, without either fiddle or farce, that the way to get water was to dig for it.

But as every conjurer is not famous alike for the same thing, so neither were those prophets; for though all of them, at least those I have spoken of, were famous for lying, some of them excelled in cursing. Elisha, whom I have just mentioned, was a chief in this branch of prophesying: it was he that cursed the forty-two children in the name of the Lord, whom the two she-bears came and devoured. We are to suppose that those children were of the party of Israel; but as those who will curse will lie, there is just as much credit to be given to this story of Elisha's two

she-bears, as there is to that of the dragon of Wantley, of whom it is said,

Poor children three devoured he,
That could not with him grapple;
And at one sup he eat them up,
As a man would eat an apple.

There was another description of men, called prophets, that amused themselves with dreams and visions; but whether by night or by day, we know not. These, if they were not quite harmless, were but little mischievous. Of this class are

Ezekiel and Daniel; and the first question upon those books, as upon all the others, is, Are they genuine? that is, were they written by Ezekiel and Daniel?

Of this there is no proof; but so far as my opinion goes, I am more inclined to believe they were, than that they were not. My reasons for this opinion are as follow: First, Because those books do not contain internal evidence, to prove they were not written by Ezekiel and Daniel, as the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, &c. &c.

Secondly, Because they were not written till after the Babylonish captivity began; and there is good reason to believe, that not any book in the Bible was written before that period: at least it is proveable, from the books themselves, as I have already shewn, that they were not written till after the commencement of the Jewish monarchy.

Thirdly, Because the manner in which the books ascribed to Ezekiel and Daniel are written, agrees with the condition these men were in at the time of writing them.

Had the numerous commentators and priests, who have foolishly employed or wasted their time in pre-

tending to expound and unriddle those books, been carried into captivity, as Ezekiel and Daniel were, it would greatly have improved their intellects, in comprehending the reason for this mode of writing, and have saved them the trouble of racking their invention, as they have done to no purpose; for they would have found, that themselves would be obliged to write whatever they had to write, respecting their own affairs, or those of their friends, or of their country, in a concealed manner, as those men have done.

These two books differ from all the rest; for it is only these that are filled with accounts of dreams and visions; and this difference arose from the situation the writers were in, as prisoners of war, or prisoners of state, in a foreign country, which obliged them to convey even the most trifling information to each other, and all their political projects or opinions, in obscure and metaphorical terms. They pretended to have dreamed dreams, and seen visions, because it was unsafe for them to speak facts or plain language. We ought, however, to suppose, that the persons to whom they wrote understood what they meant, and that it was not intended any body else should. But these busy commentators and priests have been puzzling their wits to find out what it was not intended they should know, and with which they have nothing to do.

Ezekiel and Daniel were carried prisoners to Babylon, under the first captivity, in the time of Jehoiakim, nine years before the second captivity in the time of Zedekiah. The Jews were then still numerous, and had considerable force at Jerusalem; and

it is natural to suppose, that men, in the situation of Ezekiel and Daniel, would be meditating the recovery of their country, and their own deliverance. It is reasonable to suppose, that the accounts of dreams and visions, with which these books are filled, are no other than a disguised mode of correspondence, to facilitate those objects: it served them as a cypher, or secret alphabet. If they are not this, they are tales, reveries, and nonsense; or at least a fanciful way of wearing off the wearisomeness of captivity: but the presumption is, they are the former.

Ezekiel begins his book, by speaking of a vision of *cherubims*, and of a vision of a *wheel within a wheel*, which he says he saw by the river Chebar, in the land of his captivity. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that by the Cherubims he meant the temple at Jerusalem, where they had figures of cherubims? and by a wheel within a wheel, (which, as a figure, has always been understood to signify political contrivance,) the project, or means of recovering Jerusalem? In the latter part of his book, he supposes himself transported to Jerusalem, and into the temple; and he refers back to the vision on the river Chebar, and says, chap. xliij. ver. 3, that this last vision was like the vision on the river Chebar: which indicates, that those pretended dreams and visions had for their object the recovery of Jerusalem, and nothing further.

As to the romantic interpretations and applications, wild as the dreams and visions they undertake to explain, which commentators and priests have made of these books, that of converting into things, which they call pro-

phesies, and making them bend to times and circumstances, as far remote even as the present day, it shews the fraud, or the extreme folly, to which credulity or priestcraft can go.

Scarcely any thing can be more absurd, than to suppose, that men situated as Ezekiel and Daniel were, whose country was over-run, and in the possession of the enemy, all their friends and relations in captivity abroad, or in slavery at home, or massacred, or in continual danger of it; scarcely any thing, I say, can be more absurd, than to suppose, that such men should find nothing to do, but that of employing their time and their thoughts about what was to happen to other nations a thousand or two thousand years after they should be dead; at the same time, nothing more natural than that they should meditate the recovery of Jerusalem, and their own deliverance; and that this was the sole object of all the obscure and apparently frantic writing contained in those books.

In this sense, the mode of writing used in those two books being forced by necessity, and not adopted by choice, is not irrational; but if we are to view the books as prophecies, they are false. In the 29th chapter of Ezekiel, speaking of Egypt, it is said, ver. 11, "*No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it; neither shall it be inhabited for forty years.*" This is what never came to pass, and consequently it is false, as all the books I have already reviewed are. I here close this part of the subject.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have spoken of Jonah, and of the story of him and the whale. A fit story for ridicule, if it was writ-

ten to be believed; or of laughter, if it was intended to try what credulity could swallow; for if it could swallow Jonah and the whale, it can swallow any thing.

But, as is already shewn in the observations on the book of Job, and of Proverbs, it is not always certain which of the books in the Bible are originally Hebrew, or only translations from books of the Gentiles into Hebrew; and as the book of Jonah, so far from treating of the affairs of the Jews, says nothing upon that subject, but treats altogether of the Gentiles, it is more probable that it is a book of the Gentiles, than of the Jews; and that it has been written as a fable, to expose the nonsense, and satirize the vicious and malignant character of a Bible prophet, or a predicting priest.

Jonah is represented, first, as a disobedient prophet, running away from his mission, and taking shelter on board a vessel of the Gentiles, bound from Joppa to Tarshish; as if he ignorantly supposed, by such a paltry contrivance, he could hide himself, where God could not find him. The vessel is overtaken by a storm at sea; and the mariners, all of whom are Gentiles, believing it to be a judgment, on account of some one on board who had committed a crime, agreed to cast lots, to discover the offender; and the lot fell upon Jonah. But before this, they had cast all their wares and merchandize over-board, to lighten the vessel, while Jonah, like a stupid fellow, was fast asleep in the hold.

After the lot had designated Jonah to be the offender, they questioned him to know who, and what he was? and he told them *he was an Hebrew*;

and the story implies, that he confessed himself to be guilty. But these Gentiles, instead of sacrificing him at once, without pity or mercy, as a company of Bible-prophets, or priests, would have done by a Gentile in the same case; and as it is related, Samuel had done by Agag, and Moses by the women and children; they endeavoured to save him, though at the risk of their own lives: for the account says, "*Nevertheless* (that is, though Jonah was a Jew and a foreigner, and the cause of all their misfortunes, and the loss of their cargo,) *the men rowed hard to bring the boat to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.*" Still, however, they were unwilling to put the fate of lot into execution, and they cried, says the account, unto the Lord, saying, "*We beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.*" Meaning thereby, that they did not presume to judge Jonah guilty, since he might be innocent; but that they considered the lot, that had fallen upon him, as a decree of God, or as it pleased God. The address of this prayer shews that the Gentiles worshipped *one Supreme Being*, and that they were not idolaters, as the Jews represented them to be. But the storm still continuing, and the danger increasing, they put the fate of the lot into execution, and cast Jonah into the sea; where, according to the story, a great fish swallowed him up whole and alive.

We have now to consider Jonah securely housed from the storm in the fish's belly. Here we are told that he prayed; but the prayer is a made-up prayer, taken from various parts of the Psalms, without connection or

consistency, and adapted to the distress, but not at all to the condition, that Jonah was in. It is such a prayer as a Gentile, who might know something of the Psalms, could copy out for him. This circumstance alone, were there no other, is sufficient to indicate that the whole is a made-up story. The prayer, however, is supposed to have answered the purpose, and the story goes on, (taking up, at the same time, the cant language of a Bible-prophet,) saying, "*The Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.*"

Jonah then receives a second mission to Nineveh, with which he sets out; and we have now to consider him as a preacher. The distress he is represented to have suffered, the remembrance of his own disobedience as the cause of it, and miraculous escape he is supposed to have had, were sufficient, one would conceive, to have impressed him with sympathy and benevolence in the execution of his mission; but, instead of this, he enters the city with denunciation and malediction in his mouth, crying, "*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*"

We have now to consider this supposed missionary in the last act of his mission; and here it is that the malevolent spirit of a Bible-prophet, or of a predicting priest, appears in all that blackness of character, that men ascribe to the being they call the devil.

Having published his prediction, he withdrew, says the story, to the east side of the city.—But for what? not to contemplate in retirement the mercy of his Creator to himself, or to others, but wait, with malignant impatience, the destruction of Nineveh. It came to pass, however, as the story relates, that the Ninevites reformed,

and that God, according to the Bible phrase, repented him of the evil he had said he would do unto them, and did it not. This, saith the first verse of the last chapter, *displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry*. His obdurate heart would rather that all Nineveh should be destroyed, and every soul, young and old, perish in it's ruins, than that his prediction should not be fulfilled. To expose the character of a prophet still more, a gourd is made to grow up in the night, that promises him an agreeable shelter from the heat of the sun, in the place to which he is retired; and the next morning it dies.

Here the rage of the prophet becomes excessive, and he is ready to destroy himself. "*It is better, said he, for me to die than to live.*" This brings on a supposed expostulation between the Almighty and the prophet; in which the former says, *Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd? And Jonah said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it to grow, which came up in a night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than threescore thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?*"

Here is both the winding up of the satire, and the moral of the fable. As a satire, it strikes against the character of all the Bible prophets, and against all the indiscriminate judgments upon men, women, and children, with which this lying book, the Bible, is crowded; such as Noah's flood, the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the extirpation of the Canaanites, even to sucking infants,

and women with child; because the same reflection, *that there are more than threescore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left*, meaning young children, applies to all their cases. It satirizes also the supposed partiality of the Creator for one nation, more than for another.

As a moral, it preaches against the malevolent spirit of prediction; for as certainly as a man predicts ill, he becomes inclined to wish it. The pride of having his judgment right, hardens his heart, till at last he beholds with satisfaction, or sees with disappointment, the accomplishment or the failure of his predictions.— This book ends with the same kind of strong and well-directed point against prophets, prophecies, and indiscriminate judgments, as the chapter, that Benjamin Franklin made for the Bible, about Abraham and the stranger, ending against the intolerant spirit of religious persecution. Thus much for the book of Jonah.

Of the poetical parts of the Bible, that are called prophecies, I have spoken in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, and already in this; where I have said that the word *prophet* is the Bible-word for *poet*; and that the flights and metaphors of those poets, many of which are become obscure by the lapse of time and the change of circumstance, have been ridiculously erected into things, called prophecies, and applied to purposes the writers never thought of. When a priest quotes any of those passages, he unriddles it agreeably to his own views, and imposes that explanation upon his congregation as the meaning of the writer. The *whore of Babylon* has been the common whore of all the

priests, and each has accused the other of keeping the strumpet: so well do they agree in their explanations.

Here now remain only a few books, which they call the books of the lesser prophets; and as I have already shewn that the greater are impostors, it would be cowardice to disturb the repose of the little ones. Let them sleep then, in the arms of their nurses, the

priests, and both be forgotten together.

I have gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his shoulder, and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, stick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow. —I pass on to the books of the New Testament.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament, they tell us, is founded upon the prophecies of the Old; if so, it must follow the fate of it's foundation.

As it is nothing extraordinary that a woman should be with child before she was married, and that the son she might bring forth should be executed, even unjustly; I see no reason for not believing that such a woman as Mary, and such a man as Joseph, and Jesus, existed; their mere existence is a matter of indifference, about which there is no ground, either to believe, or to disbelieve, and which comes under the common head of, *It may be so; and what then?* The probability, however, is, that there were such persons, or at least such as resembled them in part of the circumstances, because almost all romantic stories have been suggested by some actual circumstance; as the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, not a word of which is true, were suggested by the case of Alexander Selkirk.

It is not then the existence, or non-existence, of the persons that I trouble myself about; it is the fable of Jesus Christ, as is told in the New

Testament, and the wild and visionary doctrine raised thereon, against which I contend. The story, taking it as it is told, is blasphemously obscene. It gives an account of a young woman engaged to be married, and while under this engagement, she is, to speak plain language, debauched by a ghost, under the impious pretence (Luke, chap. i. ver. 35,) that "*the Holy Ghost, shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.*" Notwithstanding which, Joseph afterwards marries her as his wife, and in his turn rivals the ghost. This is putting the story into intelligible language, and when told in this manner, there is not a priest but must be ashamed to own it.*

Obscenity in matters of faith, however wrapped up, is always a token of fable and imposture; for it is necessary to our serious belief in God, that we do not connect it with stories that run, as it does, into ludicrous interpretations. This story is, upon the face of it, the same kind of story as that of Jupiter and Leda, or Jupiter and Europa, or any of the amorous adventures of Jupiter; and shews,

* Mary, the supposed virgin mother of Jesus, had several other children, sons and daughters. See Matt. Chap. xiii. ver. 55, 56.

as is already stated in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, that the Christian faith is built upon the heathen mythology.

As the historical parts of the New Testament, so far as concerns Jesus Christ, are confined to a very short space of time, less than two years, and all within the same country, and nearly to the same spot, the discordance of time, place, and circumstance, which detects the fallacy of the books of the Old Testament, and proves them to be impositions, cannot be expected to be found here in the same abundance. The New Testament, compared with the Old, is like a farce of one act, in which there is not room for very numerous violations of the unities. There are, however, some glaring contradictions, which, exclusive of the fallacy of the pretended prophecies, are sufficient to shew the story of Jesus Christ to be false.

I lay it down as a position which cannot be controverted, first, that the *agreement* of all the parts of a story does not prove that story to be true, because the parts may agree, and the whole may be false; secondly, that the *disagreement* of the parts of a story proves that the *whole cannot be true*. The agreement does not prove truth, but the disagreement proves falsehood positively.

The history of Jesus Christ is contained in the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The first chapter of Matthew begins with giving a genealogy of Jesus Christ; and in the third chapter of Luke, there is also given a genealogy of Jesus Christ. Did these two agree, it would not prove the genealogy to be true, because it might, neverthe-

less, be a fabrication; but if they contradict each other in every particular, it proves falsehood absolutely. If Matthew speak truth, Luke speaks falsehood: and if Luke speak truth, Matthew speaks falsehood: and as there is no authority for believing one more than the other, there is no authority for believing either; and if they cannot be believed, even in the very first thing they say, and set out to prove, they are not entitled to be believed in any thing they say afterwards. Truth is an uniform thing; and as to inspiration and revelation, were we to admit it, it is impossible to suppose it can be contradictory. Either then the men called apostles were impostors, or the books ascribed to them have been written by other persons, and fathered upon them, as is the case in the Old Testament.

The book of Matthew gives, chap. i. ver. 6, a genealogy by name from David, up, through Joseph, the husband of Mary, to Christ; and makes there to be *twenty-eight* generations. The book of Luke gives also a genealogy by name from Christ, through Joseph, the husband of Mary, down to David, and makes there to be *forty-three* generations; besides which, there are only the two names of David and Joseph that are alike in the two lists. I here insert both genealogical lists, and for the sake of perspicuity and comparison, have placed them both in the same direction, that is, from Joseph down to David.

Genealogy, according to Matthew:	Genealogy, according to Luke.
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Christ.

Christ.

2 Joseph.

2 Joseph.

3 Jacob.

3 Heli.

4 Matthan.

4 Matthat.

Genealogy, according to Matthew.

- 5 Eleazar.
- 6 Eliud.
- 7 Achim.
- 8 Sadoc.
- 9 Azor.
- 10 Eliakim.
- 11 Abiud.
- 12 Zorobabel.
- 13 Salathiel.
- 14 Jechonias.
- 15 Josias.
- 16 Amon.
- 17 Manasses.
- 18 Ezekias.
- 19 Achaz.
- 20 Joatham.
- 21 Ozias.
- 22 Joram.
- 23 Josaphat.
- 24 Afa.
- 25 Abia.
- 26 Roboam.
- 27 Solomon.
- 28 David.

Genealogy, according to Luke.

- 5 Levi.
- 6 Melchi.
- 7 Janna.
- 8 Joseph.
- 9 Mattathias.
- 10 Amos.
- 11 Naum.
- 12 Elli.
- 13 Nagge.
- 14 Maath.
- 15 Mattathias.
- 16 Semi.
- 17 Joseph.
- 18 Juda.
- 19 Joanna.
- 20 Rhesa.
- 21 Zorobabel.
- 22 Salathiel.
- 23 Neri.
- 24 Melchi.
- 25 Addi.
- 26 Cosam.
- 27 Elmodam.
- 28 Er.
- 29 Jose.
- 30 Eliezer.
- 31 Joram.
- 32 Matthat.
- 33 Levi.
- 34 Simeon.
- 35 Juda.
- 36 Joseph.
- 37 Jonan.
- 38 Eliakim.
- 39 Melea.
- 40 Menan.
- 41 Mattatha.
- 42 Nathan.
- 43 David.

From the birth of David to the birth of Christ is upwards of 1080 years; and as the life-time of Christ is not included, there are but 27 full

generations. To find therefore the average age of each person mentioned in the first list, at the time his first son was born, it is only necessary to divide 1080 by 27, which gives 40 years for each person. As the life-time of man was then but of the same extent it is now, it is an absurdity to suppose, that 27 following generations should all be old bachelors, before they married; and the more so, when we are told, that Solomon, the next in succession to David, had a house full of wives and mistresses, before he was twenty-one years of age. So far from this genealogy being a solemn truth, it is not even a reasonable lie. The list of Luke gives about twenty-six years for the average age, and this is too much.

Now, if these men, Matthew and Luke, set out with a falsehood between them (as these two accounts shew they do) in the very commencement of their history of Jesus Christ, and of who, and of what he was, what authority (as I have before asked) is there left for believing the strange things they tell us afterwards? If they cannot be believed in their account of his natural genealogy, how are we to believe them, when they tell us, he was the son of God, begotten by a ghost, and that an angel announced this in secret to his mother? If they lied in one genealogy, why are we to believe them in the other? If his natural genealogy be manufactured, which it certainly is, why are we not to suppose, that his celestial genealogy is manufactured also; and that the whole is fabulous? Can any man of serious reflection hazard his future happiness upon the belief of a story naturally impossible;

repugnant to every idea of decency; and related by persons already detected of falshood? Is it not more safe, that we stop ourselves at the plain, pure, and unmixed belief of one God, which is deism, than that we commit ourselves on an ocean of improbable, irrational, indecent, and contradictory tales?

The first question, however, upon the books of the New Testament, as upon those of the Old, is, Are they genuine? were they written by the persons to whom they are ascribed? for it is upon this ground only, that the strange things related therein, have been credited. Upon this point, there is no *direct proof for, or against*; and all that this state of a case proves, is *doubtfulness*; and doubtfulness is the opposite of belief. The state, therefore, that the books are in, proves against themselves as far as this kind of proof can go.

But, exclusive of this, the presumption is, that the books called the Evangelists, and ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and that they are impositions. The disordered state of the history in these four books, the silence of one book upon matters related in the other, and the disagreement that is to be found among them, implies, that they are the productions of some unconnected individuals, many years after the things they pretend to relate, each of whom made his own legend; and not the writings of men living intimately together, as the men called apostles are supposed to have done: in fine, that they have been manufactured, as the books of the Old Testament have been, by other persons, than those whose names they bear.

The story of the angel, announcing, what the church calls, the *immaculate conception*, is not so much as mentioned in the books ascribed to Mark, and John; and is differently related in Matthew, and Luke. The former says, the angel appeared to Joseph; the latter says, it was to Mary; but either Joseph or Mary was the worst evidence that could be thought of; for it was others that should have testified *for them*, and not they for themselves. Were any girl that is now with child to say, and even to swear it, that she was gotten with child by a ghost, and that an angel told her so, would she be believed? Certainly she would not. Why then are we to believe the same thing of another whom we never saw, told by nobody knows who, nor when, nor where? How strange and inconsistent is it, that the same circumstances that would weaken the belief even of a probable story, should be given as a motive for believing this one that has, upon the face of it, every token of absolute impossibility, and imposture.

The story of Herod destroying all the children under two years old, belongs altogether to the writer of the book of Matthew; and not one of the rest mentions any thing about it. Had such a circumstance been true, the universality of it must have made it known to all the writers; and the thing would have been too striking, to have been omitted by any. The writer tells us, that Jesus escaped this slaughter, because Joseph and Mary were warned by an angel, to flee with him into Egypt; but he forgot to make provision for John, who was then under two years of age. John, however, who staid behind, fared as

well as Jesus, who fled; and therefore the story circumstantially belies itself.

Not any two of these writers agree in reciting, *exactly in the same words*, the written inscription, short as it is, which they tell us, was put over Christ when he was crucified: and besides this, Mark says, He was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning); and John says, it was the sixth hour (twelve at noon).*

The inscription is thus stated in those books.

Matthew—This is Jesus the king of the Jews.

Mark—The king of the Jews.

Luke—This is the king of the Jews.

John—Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews.

We may infer from these circumstances, trivial as they are, that those writers, whoever they were, and in whatever time they lived, were not present at the scene. The only one of the men, called apostles, who appears to have been near the spot, was Peter; and when he was accused of being one of Jesus's followers, it is said (Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 74,) "*Then Peter began to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man:*" yet we are now called upon to believe this same Peter, convicted, by their own account, of perjury. For what reason, or on what authority, should we do this?

The accounts that are given of the circumstances, that they tell us attended the crucifixion, are differently related in those four books.

The book ascribed to Matthew says, "*There was darkness over all the land, from the sixth hour unto the ninth hour—that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom—that there was an earthquake—that the rocks rent—that the graves opened—that the bodies of many of the saints that slept, arose, and came out of their graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.*" Such is the account which this dashing writer of the book of Matthew gives; but in which he is not supported by the writers of the other books.

The writer of the book ascribed to Mark, in detailing the circumstances of the crucifixion, makes no mention of any earthquake, nor of the rocks rending, nor of the graves opening, nor of the dead men walking out. The writer of the book of Luke is silent also upon the same points. And as to the writer of the book of John, though he details all the circumstances of the crucifixion down to the burial of Christ, he says nothing about either the darkness—the veil of the temple—the earthquake—the rocks—the graves—nor the dead men.

Now if it had been true, that those things had happened; and if the writers of those books had lived at the time they did happen, and had been the persons they are said to be, namely, the four men called apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it was not possible for them, as true historians, even without the aid of inspiration, not to have recorded them. The things, supposing them

* According to John, the sentence was not passed till about the sixth hour (noon), and consequently, the execution could not be till the afternoon: but Mark says expressly, that he was crucified at the third hour, (nine in the morning,) chap. 15. ver. 25. John, chap. xix. ver. 14.

to have been facts, were of too much notoriety not to have been known, and of too much importance not to have been told. All these supposed apostles must have been witnesses of the earthquake, if there had been any; for it was not possible for them to have been absent from it; the opening of the graves, and the resurrection of the dead men, and their walking about the city, is of still greater importance than the earthquake. An earthquake is always possible, and natural, and proves nothing; but this opening of the graves is supernatural, and in point to their doctrine, their cause, and their apostleship. Had it been true, it would have filled up whole chapters of those books, and been the chosen theme, and general chorus of all the writers; but instead of this, little and trivial things, and mere prattling conversations of, *he said this*, and *she said that*, are often tediously detailed, while this most important of all, had it been true, is passed off in a slovenly manner, by a single dash of the pen, and that by one writer only, and not so much as hinted at by the rest.

It is an easy thing to tell a lie, but it is difficult to support the lie after it is told. The writer of the book of Matthew should have told us who the saints were that came to life again, and went into the city, and what became of them afterwards, and who it was that saw them; for he is not hardy enough to say that he saw them himself;—whether they came out naked, and all in natural buff, he-saints and she-saints; or whether they came full dressed, and where they got their dresses; whether they went to their former habitations, and reclaimed their wives, their husbands, and their property, and how they were

received; whether they entered ejectments for the recovery of their possessions, or brought actions of *crim. con.* against the rival interlopers; whether they remained on earth, and followed their former occupations of preaching or working; or whether they died again, or went back to their graves alive, and buried themselves.

Strange indeed, that an army of saints should return to life, and nobody know who they were, nor who it was that saw them, and that not a word more should be said upon the subject, nor these saints have any thing to tell us! Had it been the prophets who (as we are told) had formerly prophesied of these things, *they* must have had a great deal to say. They could have told us every thing, and we should have had posthumous prophecies, with notes and commentaries upon the first, a little better at least than we have now. Had it been Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, not an unconverted Jew had remained in all Jerusalem. Had it been John the Baptist, and the saints of the times then present, every body would have known them, and they would have out-preached and out-famed all the other apostles. But instead of this, these saints are made to pop up, like Jonah's gourd in the night, for no purpose at all, but to wither in the morning. Thus much for this part of the story.

The tale of the resurrection follows that of the crucifixion; and in this as well as in that, the writers, whoever they were, disagree so much, as to make it evident that none of them were there.

The book of Matthew states that when Christ was put in the sepulchre, the Jews applied to Pilate for a watch or a guard to be placed over the se-

pulchre, to prevent the body being stolen by the disciples; and that in consequence of this request, the sepulchre *was made sure, sealing the stone* that covered the mouth, and setting a watch. [But the other books say nothing about this application, nor about the sealing, nor the guard, nor the watch; and according to their accounts, there were none. Matthew, however, follows up this part of the story of the guard or the watch with a second part, that I shall notice in the conclusion, as it serves to detect the fallacy of those books.

The book of Matthew continues its account, and says, (chap. xxviii. ver. 1,) that at the end of the sabbath as it began to *dawn*, towards the first day of the week, came *Mary Magdalene* and the *other Mary*, to see the sepulchre. Mark says it was sun-rising, and John says it was dark. Luke says it was *Mary Magdalene*, and *Joanna*, and *Mary the mother of James*, and *other women*, that came to the sepulchre; and John states, that *Mary Magdalene* came alone. So well do they agree about their first evidence! they all, however, appear to have known most about *Mary Magdalene*; she was a woman of a large acquaintance, and it was not an ill conjecture that she might be upon the stroll.

The book of Matthew goes on to say, (ver. 2,) “And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and *sat upon it*.” But the other books say nothing about any earthquake, nor about the angel rolling back the stone, and *sitting upon it*; and according to their accounts, there was no angel *sitting there*. Mark

says, the angel *was within the sepulchre, sitting* on the right side. Luke says there were two, and they were both standing up; and John says, they were both sitting down, one at the head, and the other at the feet.

Matthew says, that the angel that was sitting upon the stone on the outside of the sepulchre, told the two Marys, that Christ was risen, and that the women went *away* quickly. Mark says, that the women upon seeing the stone rolled away, and wondering at it, went *into* the sepulchre, and that it was the angel that was *sitting* within on the right side, that told them so. Luke says, it was the two angels that were standing up; and John says, it was Jesus Christ himself that told it to *Mary Magdalene*; and that she did not go into the sepulchre, but only stooped down and looked in.

Now if the writers of these four books had gone into any court of justice, to prove an *alibi*, (for it is of the nature of an *alibi* that is here attempted to be proved, namely, the absence of a dead body, by supernatural means,) and had given their evidence in the same contradictory manner as it is here given, they would have been in danger of having their ears cropt for perjury, and would have justly deserved it. Yet this is the evidence, and these are the books, that have been imposed upon the world, as being given by divine inspiration, and as the unchangeable word of God.

The writer of the book of Matthew, after giving this account, relates a story that is not to be found in any of the other books, and which is the same I have just before alluded to.

“Now, says he, (that is, after the conversation the women had had with the angel sitting upon the stone,) be-

hold some of the watch (meaning the watch that he had said had been placed over the sepulchre) came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; and when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, that his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we *slept*; and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying (that his disciples stole him away) is commonly reported among the Jews *until this day*."

The expression, *until this day*, is an evidence that the book ascribed to Matthew was not written by Matthew, and that it has been manufactured long after the times and things of which it pretends to treat; for the expression implies a great length of intervening time. It would be inconsistent in us to speak in this manner of any thing happening in our own time. To give, therefore, intelligible meaning to the expression, we must suppose a lapse of some generations at least, for this manner of speaking carries the mind back to ancient time.

The absurdity also of the story is worth noticing; for it shews the writer of the book of Matthew to have been an exceeding weak and foolish man. He tells a story, that contradicts itself in point of possibility; for though the guard, if there were any, might be made to say that the body was taken away while they were *asleep*, that same sleep must also have prevented their knowing how, and by whom it was done; and yet they are made to say, that it was the disciples

who did it. Were a man to tender his evidence of something that he should say was done, and of the manner of doing it, and of the persons who did it, while he was asleep, and could know nothing of the matter, such evidence could not be received: it will do well enough for Testament evidence, but not for any thing where truth is concerned.

I come now to that part of the evidence in those books, that respects the pretended appearance of Christ after this pretended resurrection.

The writer of the book of Matthew relates, that the angel that was sitting on the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, said to the two Marys, chap. xxviii. ver. 7, "*Behold Christ is gone before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you.*" And the same writer, at the two next verses, (8, 9,) makes Christ himself to speak to the same purpose to these women, immediately after the angel had told it to them, and that they ran quickly to tell it to the disciples; and at the 16th verse it is said, "*Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and when they saw him, they worshipped him.*"

But the writer of the book of John tells a story very different to this; for he says, chap. xx. ver. 19, "*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, (that is, the same day that Christ is said to have risen,) when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst of them.*"

According to Matthew, the eleven were marching to Galilee, to meet Jesus in a mountain, by his own appointment, at the very time when,

according to John, they were assembled in another place, and that not by appointment, but in secret, for fear of the Jews.

The writer of the book of Luke contradicts that of Matthew more pointedly than John does; for he says expressly, that the meeting was *in Jerusalem* the evening of the same day that he (Christ) rose, and that the *eleven* were *there*. See Luke, chap. xxiv. ver. 13, 33.

Now it is not possible, unless we admit these supposed disciples the right of wilful lying, that the writers of those books could be any of the eleven persons called disciples; for if, according to Matthew, the eleven went into Galilee to meet Jesus in a mountain, by his own appointment, on the same day that he is said to have risen, Luke and John must have been two of that eleven; yet the writer of Luke says expressly, and John implies as much, that the meeting was that same day, in a house in Jerusalem, and on the other hand, if, according to Luke and John, the *eleven* were assembled in a house in Jerusalem, Matthew must have been one of that eleven; yet Matthew says, the meeting was in a mountain in Galilee, and consequently the evidence given in those books destroys each other.

The writer of the book of Mark says nothing about any meeting in Galilee; but he says, chap. xvi. ver. 12, that Christ, after his resurrection, appeared in *another form* to two of them, as they walked into country, and that these two told it to the residue, who would not believe them. Luke also tells a story, in which he keeps Christ employed the whole of the day of this pretended resurrection, until the evening, and which totally inva-

lidates the account of going to the mountain in Galilee. He says, that two of them, without saying which two, went that *same day* to a village called Emmaus, threescore furlongs (seven miles and an half) from Jerusalem, and that Christ in disguise went with them, and staid with them unto the evening, and supped with them, and then vanished out of their sight, and re-appeared that same evening, at the meeting of the eleven in Jerusalem.

This is the contradictory manner in which the evidence of this pretended re-appearance of Christ is stated; the only point in which the writers agree, is the skulking privacy of that re-appearance; for whether it was in the recess of a mountain in Galilee, or in a shut-up house in Jerusalem, it was still skulking. To what cause then are we to assign this skulking? On the one hand, it is directly repugnant to the supposed or pretended end, that of convincing the world that Christ was risen; and on the other hand, to have asserted the publicity of it, would have exposed the writers of those books to public detection; and therefore they have been under the necessity of making it a private affair.

As to the account of Christ being seen by more than five hundred at once, it is Paul only who says it, and not the five hundred who say it for themselves. It is therefore the testimony but of one man, and that too of a man, who did not, according to the same account, believe a word of the matter himself, at the time it is said to have happened. His evidence, supposing him to have been the writer of the 15th chapter of Corinthians, where this account is given, is like

that of a man, who comes into a court of justice to swear, that what he had sworn before is false. A man may often see reason, and he has too always the right of changing his opinion; but this liberty does not extend to matters of fact.

I now come to the last scene, that of the ascension into heaven. Here all fear of the Jews, and of every thing else, must necessarily have been out of the question; it was that which, if true, was to seal the whole; and upon which the reality of the future mission of the disciples was to rest for proof. Words, whether declarations, or promises that passed in private, either in the recess of a mountain in Galilee, or in a shut-up house in Jerusalem, even supposing them to have been spoken, could not be evidence in public: it was therefore necessary that this last scene should preclude the possibility of denial, and dispute; and that it should be, as I have stated in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, as public and as visible, as the sun at noon-day; at least, it ought to have been as public as the crucifixion is reported to have been. But to come to the point.—

In the first place, the writer of the book of Matthew does not say a syllable about it; neither does the writer of the book of John. This being the case, is it possible to suppose, that those writers, who affect to be even minute in other matters, would have been silent upon this, had it been true? The writer of the book of Mark passes it off in a careless, flowenly manner, with a single dash of the pen; as if he was tired of romancing, or ashamed of the story. So also does the writer of Luke. And

even between these two, there is not an apparent agreement, as to the place where this final parting is said to have been.

The book of Mark says, that Christ appeared to the eleven, as they sat at meat; alluding to the meeting of the eleven at Jerusalem: he then states the conversation, that he says passed at that meeting; and immediately after says, (as a school-boy would finish a dull story,) “*So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*” But the writer of Luke says, that the ascension was from Bethany; that *he* (Christ) *led them out as far as Bethany, and was parted from them there, and was carried up into heaven.* So also was Mahomet: and as to Moses, the *apostle* Jude says, ver. 9, *That Michael and the Devil disputed about his body.* While we believe such fables as these, or either of them, we believe unworthily of the Almighty.

I have now gone through the examination of the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and when it is considered that the whole space of time, from the crucifixion to what is called the ascension, is but a few days, apparently not more than three or four, and that all the circumstances are reported to have happened nearly about the same spot, Jerusalem, it is, I believe, impossible to find, in any story upon record, so many, and such glaring absurdities, contradictions, and falsehoods, as are in those books. They are more numerous and striking, than I had any expectation of finding when I began this examination, and far more so than I had any idea of, when I wrote the former part of the *Age of*

Reason. I had then neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, nor could I procure any. My own situation, even as to existence, was becoming every day more precarious; and as I was willing to leave something behind me upon the subject, I was obliged to be quick and concise. The quotations I then made, were from memory only, but they are correct; and the opinions I have advanced in that work, are the effect of the most clear and long established conviction,—that the Bible and Testament are impositions upon the world;—that the fall of man, the account of Jesus Christ being the Son of God, and of his dying to appease the wrath of God, and of salvation by that strange means, are all fabulous inventions, dishonourable to the wisdom and power of the Almighty;—that the only true religion is deism, by which I then meant and now mean the belief of one God, and an imitation of his moral character, or the practice of what are called moral virtues;—and that it was upon this only (so far as religion is concerned) that I rested all my hopes of happiness hereafter. So say I now—and so help me God.

But to return to the subject.—Though it is impossible, at this distance of time, to ascertain as a fact, who were the writers of those four books (and this alone is sufficient to hold them in doubt, and where we doubt, we do not believe,) it is not difficult to ascertain negatively, that they were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed. The contradictions in those books demonstrate two things.

First, that the writers cannot have been eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the matters they relate, or they

would have related them without those contradictions; and consequently that the books have not been written by the persons called apostles, who are supposed to have been witnesses of this kind.

Secondly, that the writers, whoever they were, have not acted in concerted impositions; but each writer, separately and individually for himself, and without the knowledge of the other.

The same evidence that applies to prove the one, applies equally to prove both these cases; that is, that the books were not written by the men called apostles, and also that they are not a concerted imposition. As to inspiration, it is altogether out of the question; we may as well attempt to unite truth and falsehood, as inspiration and contradiction.

If four men are eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses to a scene, they will, without any concert among them, agree as to the time and place, when and where that scene happened. Their individual knowledge of the *thing*, each one knowing it for himself, renders concert totally unnecessary; the one will not say it was in a mountain in the country, and the other at a house in town; the one will not say it was at sun-rise, and the other that it was dark. For in whatever place it was, and at whatever time it was, they know it equally alike.

And on the other hand, if four men concert a story, they will make their separate relations of that story agree and corroborate each other to support the whole. *That* concert supplies the want of fact in the one case, as the knowledge of the fact supercedes, in the other case, the necessity of concert. The same contradictions, therefore, that

prove there has been no concert, prove also, that the reporters had no knowledge of the fact, (or rather of that which they relate as a fact,) and detect also the falshood of their reports. Those books, therefore, have neither been written by the men called apostles, nor by impostors in concert. How then have they been written?

I am not one of those who are fond of believing there is much of that which is called wilful lying, or lying originally, except in the case of men setting up to be prophets, as in the Old Testament; for prophesying is lying professionally. In almost all other cases, it is not difficult to discover the progress, by which even simple supposition, with the aid of credulity, will in time grow into a lie, and at last be told as a fact; and whenever we can find a charitable reason for a thing of this kind, we ought not to indulge a severe one.

The story of Jesus Christ appearing after he was dead, is the story of an apparition; such as timid imagination can always create in vision, and credulity believe. Stories of this kind had been told of the assassination of Julius Cæsar not many years before, and they generally have their origin in violent deaths, or in execution of innocent persons. In cases of this kind, compassion lends it's aid, and benevolently stretches the story. It goes on a little and a little farther, till it becomes a *most certain truth*. Once start a ghost, and credulity fills up the history of it's life, and assigns the cause of it's appearance; one tells it one way, another another way, till there are as many stories about the ghost, and about the proprietor of the ghost, as there are about Jesus Christ in these four books.

The story of the appearance of Jesus Christ is told with that strange mixture of the natural and the impossible, that distinguishes a legendary tale from fact. He is represented as suddenly coming in, and going out, when the doors are shut, and of vanishing out of sight, and appearing again, as one would conceive of an unsubstantial vision; then again he is hungry, sits down to meat, and eats his supper. But as those who tell stories of this kind, never provide for all the cases, so it is here: they have told us, that when he arose, he left his grave cloaths behind him; but they have forgotten to provide other cloaths for him to appear in afterwards, or to tell us what he did with them, when he ascended; whether he stript all off, or went up, cloaths and all. In the case of Elijah, they have been careful enough to make him throw down his mantle; how it happened not to be burnt in the chariot of fire, *they* also have not told us. But as imagination supplies all deficiencies of this kind, we may suppose, if we please, that it was made of salamander's wool.

Those who are not much acquainted with ecclesiastical history may suppose, that the book called the New Testament has existed ever since the time of Jesus Christ, as they suppose that the books ascribed to Moses, have existed ever since the time of Moses. But the fact is historically otherwise; there was no such book as the New Testament, till more than three hundred years after the time that Christ is said to have lived.

At what time the books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, began to appear, is altogether a matter of uncertainty. There is not the least shadow of evidence of who the

persons were that wrote them; and they might as well have been called by the names of any of the other supposed apostles, as by the names they are now called. The originals are not in the possession of any christian church existing, any more than the two tables of stones written on, as they pretend, by the finger of God, upon mount Sinai, and given to Moses, are in the possession of the Jews. And even if they were, there is no possibility of proving the hand-writing in either case. At the time those four books were written, there was no printing, and consequently there could be no publication, otherwise than by written copies, which any man might make, or alter at pleasure, and call them originals. Can we suppose it is consistent with the wisdom of the Almighty, to commit himself and his will to man upon such precarious means as these; or that it is consistent we should pin our faith upon such uncertainty? We cannot make, nor alter, nor even imitate so much as a blade of grass, that he has made, and yet we can make or alter *words of God*, as easily as words of man.*

About three hundred and fifty years after the time that Christ is said to have lived, several writings of the kind I am speaking of, were scattered in the hands of divers individuals; and as the church had begun

to form itself into a hierarchy, or church government with temporal powers, it set itself about collecting them into a code, as we now see them, called *The New Testament*. They decided by vote, as I have before said in the former part of the *Age of Reason*, which of those writings, out of the collection they had made, should be the *word of God*, and which should not. The Rabbins of the Jews had decided, by vote, upon the books of the Bible before.

As the object of the church was, as is the case in all national establishments of churches, power and revenue, and terror the means it used; it is consistent to suppose, that the most miraculous and wonderful of the writings they had collected, stood the best chance of being voted. And as to the authenticity of the books, the *vote stands in the place of it*; for it can be traced no higher.

Disputes, however, ran high among the people then calling themselves Christians; not only as to points of doctrine, but as to the authenticity of the books. In the contest between the persons called Saint Augustine, and Fauste, about the year 400, the latter says, "The books, called the Evangelists, have been composed long after the times of the apostles, by some obscure men, who fearing that the world would not give credit to their relation of matters, of which

* The former part of the *Age of Reason* has not been published two years, and there is already an expression in it, that is not mine. The expression is, *The book of Luke was carried by a majority of one vote only*. It may be true, but it is not I that have said it. Some person, who might know of that circumstance, has added it in a note at the bottom of the page of some of the editions, printed either in England, or in America; and the printers, after that, have erected it into the body of the work, and made me the author of it. If this has happened within such a short space of time, notwithstanding the aid of printing, which prevents the alteration of copies individually; what may not have happened in a much greater length of time, when there was no printing, and when any man who could write, could make a written copy, and call it an original, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John?

they could not be informed, have published them under the names of the apostles; and which are so full of sottishness and discordant relations, that there is neither agreement, nor connection between them."

And in another place, addressing himself to the advocates of those books, as being the word of God, he says, "It is thus that your predecessors have inserted, in the scriptures of our Lord, many things, which, though they carry his name, agree not with his doctrine. This is not surprising, *since that we have often proved*, that these things have not been written by himself nor by his apostles, but that for the greatest part they are founded upon *tales*, upon *vague reports*, and put together by I know not what, half-Jews, with but little agreement between them; and which they have nevertheless published under the names of the apostles of our Lord, and have thus attributed to them their own *errors and their lies*."*

The reader will see by these extracts that the authenticity of the books of the New Testament was denied, and the books treated as tales, forgeries, and lies, at the time they were voted to be the word of God. But the interest of the church, with the assistance of the faggot, bore down the opposition, and at last oppressed all investigation. Miracles followed upon miracles, if we will believe them, and men were taught to say they believed, whether they believed or not. But (by way of throwing in a thought) the French revolution has excommunicated the church from the power of working miracles; she has not been able, with the assistance of all her saints, to work *one* miracle since the revolution began: and as she never stood in greater need than now, we may, without the aid of divination, conclude, that all her former miracles are tricks and lies.†

When we consider the lapse of more than three hundred years intervening

* I have taken these two extracts from Boulanger's Life of Paul, written in French. Boulanger has quoted them from the writings of Augustine against Fauste, to which he refers.

† Boulanger, in his Life of St. Paul, has collected from the ecclesiastical histories, and the writings of the fathers, as they are called, several matters, which shew the opinions that prevailed among the different sects of Christians, at the time the Testament, as we now see it, was voted to be the word of God. The following extracts are from the second chapter of that work.

"The Marcionists (a Christian sect) assured that the evangelists were filled with falsities. The Manichians, who formed a very numerous sect at the commencement of Christianity, *rejected as false all the New Testament*; and shewed other writings quite different, that they gave for authentic. The Corinthians, like the Marcionists, admitted not the Acts of the Apostles. The Eucratians and the Sevenians adopted neither the Acts, nor the Epistles of Paul. Chrysostome, in a homily, which he made upon the Acts of the Apostles, says, that in his time, about the year 400, many people knew nothing either of the author, or of the book. St. Irene, who lived before that time, reports that the Valentinians, like several other sects of the Christians, accused the scriptures of being filled with errors, imperfections, and contradictions. The Ebionists, or Nazarenes, who were the first Christians, rejected all the Epistles of Paul, and regarded him as an impostor. They report, among other things, that he was originally a Pagan, that he came to Jerusalem, where he lived some time; and that having a mind to marry the daughter of the high-priest, he caused himself to be circumcised; but that not being able to obtain her, he quarrelled with the Jews, and wrote against circumcision, and against the observation of the sabbath, and against all the legal ordinances."

between the time that Christ is said to have lived, and the time the New Testament was formed into a book, we must see, even without the assistance of historical evidence, the exceeding uncertainty there is of its authenticity. The authenticity of the book of Homer, so far as regards the authorship, is much better established than that of the New Testament, though Homer is a thousand years the more ancient. It was only an exceeding good poet that could have written the book of Homer, and therefore few men only could have attempted it; and a man capable of doing it, would not have thrown away his own fame, by giving it to another. In like manner, there were but few that could have composed Euclid's Elements, because none but an exceeding good geometrician could have been the author of that work.

But with respect to the books of the New Testament, particularly such parts as tell us of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, any person who could tell a story of an apparition, or of a *man's walking*, could have made such books; for the story is most wretchedly told. The chance, therefore, of forgery in the Testament, is millions to one greater than in the case of Homer or Euclid. Of the numerous priests or parsons of the present day, bishops, and all, every one of them can make a sermon, or translate a scrap of Latin, especially if it has been translated a thousand times before; but is there any amongst them that can write poetry like Homer, or science like Euclid? The sum total of a parson's learning, with very few exceptions, is, a b, ab, and hic, hæc, hoc; and their knowledge of science is, three times one is three; and this

is more than sufficient to have enabled them, had they lived at the time, to have written all the books of the New Testament.

As the opportunities of forgery were greater, so also was the inducement. A man could gain no advantage by writing under the name of Homer or Euclid; if he could write equal to them, it would be better that he wrote under his own name; if inferior, he could not succeed. Pride would prevent the former, and impossibility the latter. But with respect to such books as compose the New Testament, all the inducements were on the side of forgery. The best imagined history that could have been made at the distance of two or three hundred years after the time, could not have passed for an original under the name of the real writer; the whole chance of success lay in forgery; for the church wanted pretence for its new doctrine, and truth and talents were out of the question.

But as it is not uncommon (as before observed) to relate stories of persons *walking* after they are dead, and of ghosts and apparitions of such as have fallen by some violent or extraordinary means; and as the people of that day were in the habit of believing such things, and of the appearance of angels, and also of devils, and of their getting into people's insides, and shaking them like a fit of an ague, and of their being cast out again as if by an emetic; (Mary Magdalene, the book of Mark tells us, had brought up, or been brought to bed of, seven devils;) it was nothing extraordinary that some story of this kind should get abroad of the person called Jesus Christ, and afterwards become the foundation of the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Each writer told the tale as he heard it, or thereabout, and gave to his book the name of the saint, or the apostle, whom tradition had given as the eye-witness. It is only upon this ground that the contradictions in those books can be accounted for; and if this be not the case, they are downright impositions, lies, and forgeries, without even the apology of credulity.

That they have been written by a sort of half Jews, as the foregoing quotations mention, is discernible enough. The frequent references made to that chief assassin and impostor Moses, and to the men called prophets, establishes this point; and on the other hand, the church has complimented the fraud, by admitting the Bible and the Testament to reply to each other. Between the Christian-Jew, and the Christian-Gentile, the thing called a prophecy, and the thing prophesied of; the type, and the thing typified; the sign, and the thing signified; have been industriously rumaged up, and fitted together like old locks and picklock-keys. The story, foolishly enough told, of Eve and the serpent, and naturally enough as to the enmity between men and serpents; (for the serpent always bites about the *heel*, because it cannot reach higher; and the man always knocks the serpent

about the *head*, as the most effectual way to prevent it's biting;*) this foolish story, I say, has been made into a prophecy, a type, and a promise to begin with: and the lying imposition of Isaiah to Ahaz, *That a virgin should conceive and bear a son*, as a sign that Ahaz should conquer, when the event was, that he was defeated, (as already noticed in the observations on the book of Isaiah,) has been perverted, and made to serve as a wind-up.

Jonah and the whale are also made into signs and types. Jonah is Jesus, and the whale is the grave; for it is said, (and they have made Christ to say it of himself,) Matt. chap. xii. ver. 40, "For as Jonah was *three days and three nights* in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be *three days and three nights* in the heart of the earth." But it happens awkwardly enough that Christ, according to their own account, was but two nights and one day in the grave; about 36 hours, instead of 72; that is, the Friday night, the Saturday, and the Saturday night; for he was up, on the Sunday morning, by sun-rise or before. But as this fits quite as well as the *bite* and the *kick* in Genesis, and the *virgin* and her *son* in Isaiah, it will pass in the lump of *orthodox* things. Thus much for the historical part of the Testament, and it's evidences.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL.

The epistles ascribed to Paul, being fourteen in number, almost fill up the remaining part of the Testament. Whether those epistles were written by the person to whom they are ascribed is a matter of no great importance, since that the writer, whoever he was, attempts to prove his doctrine

by argument. He does not pretend to have been witness to any of the scenes told of the resurrection and the ascension, and he declares that he had not believed them,

The story of his being struck to the ground as he was journeying to Damascus, has nothing in it miracu-

* "It shall bruise thy *head* and thou shalt bruise his *heel*," Genesis, chap. iii. ver. 15.

lous or extraordinary; he escaped with life, and that is more than many others have done who have been struck with lightning: and that he should lose his sight for three days, and be unable to eat or drink during that time, is nothing more than is common in such conditions. His companions that were with him appear not to have suffered in the same manner, for they were well enough to lead him the remainder of the journey; neither did they pretend to have seen any vision.

The character of the person called Paul, according to the accounts given of him, has in it a great deal of violence and fanaticism; he had persecuted with as much heat as he preached afterwards; the stroke he had received had changed his thinking, without altering his constitution; and either as a Jew or a Christian he was the same zealot. Such men are never good moral evidences of any doctrine they preach. They are always in extremes, as well of action as of belief.

The doctrine he sets out to prove by argument is the resurrection of the same body, and he advances this as an evidence of immortality. But so much will men differ in their manner of thinking, and in the conclusions they draw from the same premises, that this doctrine of the resurrection of the same body, so far from being an evidence of immortality, appears to me to furnish an evidence against it: for, if I have already died in this body, and am raised again in the same body in which I have died, it is presumptive evidence that I shall die again. That resurrection no more secures me against the repetition of dying, than an ague fit, when past, secures me against another. To believe therefore in immortality, I must

have a more elevated idea, than is contained in the gloomy doctrine of the resurrection.

Besides, as a matter of choice, as well as of hope, I had rather have a better body and a more convenient form, than the present. Every animal in the creation excels us in something. The winged insects, without mentioning doves or eagles, can pass over more space, and with greater ease, in a few minutes, than man can in an hour. The glide of the smallest fish, in proportion to its bulk, exceeds us in motion, almost beyond comparison, and without weariness. Even the sluggish snail can ascend from the bottom of a dungeon, where man, by the want of that ability, would perish; and a spider can launch itself from the top, as playful amusement. The personal powers of man are so limited, and his heavy frame so little constructed to extensive enjoyment, and there is nothing to induce us to wish the opinion of Paul to be true. It is too little for the magnitude of the scene; too mean for the sublimity of the subject.

But all other arguments apart, the *consciousness of existence* is the only conceivable idea we can have of another life; and the continuance of that consciousness is immortality. The consciousness of existence, or the knowing that we exist, is not necessarily confined to the same form, nor to the same matter, even in this life.

We have not in all cases the same form, nor in any case the same matter that composed our bodies twenty or thirty years ago; and yet we are conscious of being the same persons. Even legs and arms, which make up almost half the human frame, are not necessary to the consciousness of existence. They may be lost, or taken

away, and the full consciousness of existence remain; and were their place supplied by wings, or other appendages, we cannot conceive that it could alter our consciousness of existence. In short, we know not how much, or rather how little, of our composition it is, and how exquisitely fine that little is, that creates in us this consciousness of existence; and all beyond that is like the pulp of a peach, distinct and separate from the vegetative speck in the kernel.

Who can say what exceeding fine action of fine matter it is, that produces a thought in what we call the mind? And yet that thought, when produced, as I now produce the thought I am writing, is capable of becoming immortal, and is the only production of men that has that capacity.

Statues of brass or marble will perish; and statues made in imitation of them are not the same statues, nor the same workmanship, any more than a copy of a picture is the same picture. But print and reprint a thought a thousand times over, and with materials of any kind, carve it in wood, or engrave it on stone, the thought is eternally and identically the same thought in every case. It has a capacity of unimpaired existence, unaffected by change of matter, and is essentially distinct, and of a nature different from every thing else that we know of, or can conceive. If then the thing produced has in itself, a capacity of being immortal, it is more than a token that the power that produced it, which is the self-same thing as consciousness of existence, can be immortal also; and that independently of the matter it was first connected with, as the thought is of the printing, or writing, it first appeared

in. The one idea is not more difficult to believe than the other; and we can see that one is true.

That the consciousness of existence is not dependent on the same form, or the same matter, is demonstrated to our senses in the works of the creation, so far as our senses are capable of receiving that demonstration. A very numerous part of the animal creation preaches to us, far better than Paul, the belief of a life hereafter. Their little life resembles an earth and a heaven, a present and a future state; and comprises, if it may be so expressed, immortality in miniature.

The most beautiful parts of the creation, to our eyes, are the winged insects; and they are not so originally. They acquire that form and that inimitable brilliancy by progressive changes. The slow and creeping caterpillar-worm of to-day, passes in a few days to a torpid figure and a state resembling death; and in the next change comes forth in all the miniature magnificence of life, a splendid butterfly. No resemblance of the former creature remains; every thing is changed; all his powers are new, and life is to him another thing. We cannot conceive, that the consciousness of existence is not the same in this state of the animal as before: why then must I believe that the resurrection of the same body is necessary to continue to me the consciousness of existence hereafter?

In the former part of the *Age of Reason* I have called the creation the true and only real word of God; and this instance, or this text, in the book of creation, not only shews to us that this thing may be so: but that it is so; and that the belief of a future state is *a rational belief*, found-

ed upon facts visible on the creation : for it is not more difficult to believe that we shall exist hereafter in a better state and form than at present, than that a worm should become a butterfly, and quit the dunghill for the atmosphere, if we did not know it as a fact.

As to the doubtful jargon ascribed to Paul in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, which makes part of the burial-service of some Christians, it is as destitute of meaning as the tolling of the bell at the funeral. It explains nothing to the understanding ; it illustrates nothing to the imagination ; but leaves the reader to find any meaning if he can.

“ All flesh,” says he, “ is not the same flesh. There is one flesh of men, another of fishes, and another of birds.” And what then ? nothing. A cook could have said as much. “ There are also,” says he, “ bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial ; the glory of the celestial is *one*, and the glory of the terrestrial is *another*.” And what then ? nothing. And what is the difference ? nothing that he has told. “ There is,” says he, “ one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars.” And what then ? nothing ; except that he says that *one star differeth from another star in glory*, instead of distance ; and he might as well have told us, that the moon did not shine as bright as the sun. All this is nothing better than the jargon of a conjuror, who picks up phrases he does not understand, to confound the credulous people who come to have their fortune told. Priests and conjurors are of the same trade.

Sometimes Paul affects to be a naturalist, and to prove his system of re-

surrection from the principles of vegetation. “ *Thou fool*, says he, “ *that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.*” To which one might reply in his own language, and say, Thou fool, Paul, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die *not* ; for the grain that dies in the ground, never does, nor can vegetate. The living grains only produce the next crop. But the metaphor, in point of view, is no simile. It is succession and resurrection.

The progress of an animal, from one state of being to another, as from a worm to a butterfly, applies to the case ; but this of the grain does not ; and shews Paul to have been, what he says of others, *a fool*.

Whether the fourteen epistles ascribed to Paul were written by him or not, is a matter of indifference ; they are either argumentative or dogmatical ; and as the argument is defective, and the dogmatical part is merely presumptive, it signifies not who wrote them. And the same may be said for the remaining parts of the Testament. It is not upon the Epistles, but upon what is called the Gospel, contained in the four books ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and upon the pretended prophecies, that the theory of the church, calling itself the Christian church, is founded. The epistles are dependent upon those, and must follow their fate ; for if the story of Jesus Christ be fabulous, all reasoning founded upon it, as a supposed truth, must fall with it.

We know, from history, that one of the principal leaders of this church, Athanasius, lived at the time the New Testament was formed ; and we know also, from the absurd jargon he has left us, under the name of a creed,

the character of the men who formed the New Testament;* and we know also from the same history, that the authenticity of the books, of which it is composed, was denied at the time. It is upon the vote of such as Athanasius, that the Testament was decreed to be the word of God; and nothing can present to us a more strange idea, than that of decreeing the word of God by vote. Those who rest their faith upon such authority, put man in the place of God, and have no true foundation for future happiness. Credulity, however, is not a crime; but it becomes criminal by resisting conviction. It is strangling in the womb of the conscience the efforts it makes to ascertain truth. We should never force belief upon ourselves in any thing.

I here close the subject on the Old Testament, and the New. The evidence I have produced, to prove them forgeries, is extracted from the

books themselves, and acts, like a two-edged sword, either way. If the evidence be denied, the authenticity of the scripture is denied with it; for it is scripture-evidence; and if the evidence be admitted, the authenticity of the books is disproved. The contradictory impossibilities contained in the Old Testament, and the New, put them in the case of a man who swears *for* and *against*. Either evidence convicts him of perjury, and equally destroys reputation.

Should the Bible and Testament hereafter fall, it is not I that have been the occasion. I have done no more, than extract the evidence from the confused mass of matters with which it is mixed, and arrange that evidence in a point of light to be clearly seen, and easily comprehended: and having done this, I leave the reader to judge for himself; as I have judged for myself.

CONCLUSION.

In the former part of the *Age of Reason*, I have spoken of the three frauds, *mystery*, *miracle*, and *prophecy*: and as I have seen nothing in any of the answers to that work, that in the least affects what I have there said upon those subjects, I shall not encumber this second part with additions, that are not necessary.

I have spoken also in the same work upon what is called *revelation*, and have shewn the absurd misapplication of that term to the books of the Old Testament, and the New; for certainly revelation is out of the question in reciting any thing of which man has been the

actor or the witness. That which a man has done or seen needs no revelation to tell him he has done it, or seen it, for he knows it already; nor to enable him to tell it, or to write it. It is ignorance, or imposition, to apply the term revelation in such cases; yet the Bible and Testament are classed under this fraudulent description of being all *revelation*.

Revelation then, so far as the term has relation between God and man, can only be applied to something which God reveals of his *will* to man; but though the power of the Almighty, to make such a communication, is necessarily admitted, because to that

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* Athanasius died, according to the church chronology, in the year 371.

power all things are possible, yet, the thing so revealed (if any thing ever was revealed, and which, by the bye, it is impossible to prove) is revelation to the person *only to whom it is made*. His account of it to another is not revelation; and whoever puts faith in that account, puts it in the man from whom the account comes; and that man may have been deceived, or may have dreamed it; or he may be an impostor, and may lie. There is no possible criterion whereby to judge of the truth of what he tells; for even the morality of it would be no proof of revelation. In all such cases, the proper answer would be, "*When it is revealed to me, I will believe it to be revelation; but it is not, and cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it to be revelation before; neither is it proper that I should take the word of man as the word of God, and put man in the place of God.*" This is the manner in which I have spoken of revelation in the former part of the *Age of Reason*; and which, whilst it reverentially admits revelation as a possible thing, because, as before said, to the Almighty all things are possible, it prevents the imposition of one man upon another, and precludes the wicked use of pretended revelation.

But though, speaking for myself, I thus admit the possibility of revelation; I totally disbelieve, that the Almighty ever did communicate any thing to man, by any mode of speech in any language, or by any kind of vision, or appearance, or by any means which our senses are capable of receiving, otherwise than by the universal display of himself in the works of the creation, and by that repugnance we feel in ourselves to bad actions, and disposition to good ones.

The most detestable wickedness, the most horrid cruelties, and the greatest miseries, that have afflicted the human race, have had their origin in this thing called revelation, or revealed religion. It has been the most dishonourable belief against the character of the Divinity, the most destructive to morality, and the peace and happiness of man, that ever was propagated since man began to exist. It is better, far better, that we admitted, if it were possible, a thousand devils to roam at large, and to preach publicly the doctrine of devils, if there were any such, than that we permitted one such impostor or monster as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and the Bible-prophets to come with the pretended word of God in his mouth, and have credit among us.

Whence arose all the horrid assassinations of whole nations, of men, women, and infants, with which the Bible is filled, and the bloody persecutions, and tortures unto death, and religious wars, that since that time have laid Europe in blood and ashes; whence arose they, but from this impious thing called revealed religion, and this monstrous belief, that God has spoken to man? The lies of the Bible have been the cause of the one, and the lies of the Testament the other.

Some Christians pretend that Christianity was not established by the sword; but of what period of time do they speak? It was impossible that *twelve* men could *begin* with the sword; they had not the power; but no sooner were the professors of Christianity sufficiently powerful to employ the sword, than they did so, and the stake and the faggot too; and Mahomet could not do it sooner. By the same spirit that Peter cut off the ear

of the high priest's servant, (if the story be true,) he would cut off his head, and the head of his master, had he been able. Besides this, Christianity grounds itself originally upon the Bible, and the Bible was established altogether by the sword, and that in the worst use of it; not to terrify, but to extirpate. The Jews made no converts; butchered all. The Bible is the fire of the Testament, and both are called the *word of God*. The Christians read both books; the ministers preach from both books; and this thing called Christianity is made up of both. It is then false to say, that Christianity was not established by the sword.

The only sect that has not persecuted are the Quakers; and the only reason that can be given for it, is, that they are rather Deists than Christians. They do not believe much about Jesus Christ, and they call the scriptures a dead letter. Had they called them by a worse name, they had been nearer the truth.

It is incumbent on every man who reverences the character of the Creator, and who wishes to lessen the catalogue of artificial miseries, and remove the cause that has sown persecutions thick among mankind, to expel all ideas of revealed religion as a dangerous heresy, and an impious fraud. What is it that we have learned from this pretended thing called

revealed religion?—nothing that is useful to man, and every thing that is dishonourable to his Maker. What is it the Bible teaches us;—rapine, cruelty, and murder. What is it the Testament teaches us?—to believe that the Almighty committed debauchery with a woman, engaged to be married; and the belief of this debauchery is called faith.

As to the fragments of morality that are irregularly and thinly scattered in those books, they make no part of this pretended thing, revealed religion. They are the natural dictates of conscience, and the bonds by which society is held together, and without which, it cannot exist; and are nearly the same in all religions, and in all societies. The Testament teaches nothing new upon this subject; and where it attempts to exceed, it becomes mean, and ridiculous. The doctrine of not retaliating injuries is much better expressed in Proverbs, which is a collection as well from the Gentiles, as the Jews, than it is in the Testament. It is there said, Proverbs xxv. ver. 21, "*If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:*"* but when it is said, as in the Testament, "*If a man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;*" it is assassinating the dignity of forbearance, and sinking man into a spaniel.

* According to what is called Christ's sermon on the mount in the book of Matthew, where, among some good things, a great deal of this feigned morality is introduced, it is there expressly said, that the doctrine of forbearance, or of not retaliating injuries, *was not any part of the doctrine of the Jews*; and as this doctrine is found in Proverbs, it must, according to that statement, have been copied from the Gentiles, from whom Christ learned it. Those men, whom Jewish and Christian idolators have abusively called heathens, had much better and clearer ideas of justice and morality than are to be found in the Old Testament, so far as it is Jewish; or in the New. The answer of Solon on the question, "Which is the most perfect popular government," has never been exceeded by any man since his time, as containing a maxim of political morality. "*That says he, where the least injury done to the meanest individual, is considered as an insult on the whole constitution.*" Solon lived above 500 years before Christ.

Loving enemies is another dogma of feigned morality, and has besides no meaning. It is incumbent on man, as a moralist, that he does not revenge an injury; and it is equally as good in a political sense, for there is no end to retaliation; each retaliates on the other, and calls it justice: but to love in proportion to the injury, if it could be done, would be to offer a premium for a crime. Besides, the word *enemies* is too vague and general to be used in a moral maxim, which ought always to be clear and defined, like a proverb. If a man be the enemy of another from mistake and prejudice, as in the case of religious opinions, and sometimes in politics, that man is different to an enemy at heart with a criminal intention; and it is incumbent upon us, and it contributes also to our own tranquillity, that we put the best construction upon a thing that it will bear. But even this erroneous motive in him makes no motive for love on the other part; and to say that we can love voluntarily, and without a motive, is morally and physically impossible.

Morality is injured by prescribing to it duties, that, in the first place, are impossible to be performed; and, if they could be, would be productive of evil: or, as before said, be premiums for crime. The maxim of *doing as we would be done unto* does not include this strange doctrine of loving enemies; for no man expects to be loved himself for his crime, or for his enmity.

Those who preach this doctrine of loving their enemies, are in general the greatest persecutors, and they act consistently by so doing; for the doctrine is hypocritical; and it is natural that hypocrisy should act the reverse of what it preaches. For my own

part, I disown the doctrine, and consider it as a feigned or fabulous morality; yet the man does not exist that can say, I have persecuted him, or any man, or any set of men, either in the American revolution, or in the French revolution; or that I have, in any case, returned evil for evil. But it is not incumbent on man to reward a bad action with a good one, or to return good for evil; and wherever it is done, it is a voluntary act, and not a duty. It is also absurd to suppose, that such doctrine can make any part of a revealed religion. We imitate the moral character of the Creator by forbearing with each other, for he forbears with all: but this doctrine would imply that he loved man, not in proportion as he was good, but as he was bad.

If we consider the nature of our condition here, we must see there is no occasion for such a thing as *revealed religion*. What is it we want to know? Does not the creation, the universe we behold, preach to us the existence of an Almighty power, that governs and regulates the whole? And is not the evidence that this creation holds out to our senses infinitely stronger than any thing we can read in a book, that any impostor might make, and call the word of God? As for morality, the knowledge of it exists in every man's conscience.

Here we are. The existence of an Almighty power is sufficiently demonstrated to us, though we cannot conceive, as it is impossible we should, the nature and manner of its existence. We cannot conceive how we came here ourselves, and yet we know for a fact that we are here. We must know also, that the power that called us into being can, if he please, and when he pleases, call us to account for the

manner in which we have lived here ; and therefore, without seeking any other motive for the belief, it is rational to believe that he will, for we know beforehand that he can. The probability, or even possibility of the thing is all that we ought to know ; for if we knew it as a fact, we should be the mere slaves of terror, our belief would have no merit, and our best actions no virtue.

Deism then teaches us, without the possibility of being deceived, all that is necessary or proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the deist. He there reads, in the hand writing of the Creator himself, the certainty of his existence ; and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries. The probability that we may be called to account hereafter, will, to a reflecting mind, have the influence of belief ; for it is not our belief, or our disbelief, that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the state we are in, and which it is proper we should be in, as free agents, it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent men, that will live as if there were no God.

But the belief of a God is so weakened by being mixed with the strange fable of the Christian creed, and with the wild adventures related in the Bible, and the obscurity and obscene nonsense of the Testament, that the mind of man is bewildered as in a fog. Viewing all these things in a confused mass, he confounds fact with fable ; and as he cannot believe all, he feels a disposition to reject all. But the belief of a God, is a belief distinct from all other things, and ought not to be confounded with any. The notion of a Trinity of Gods has enfeebled the belief of *one* God. A multiplication of beliefs acts as a division

of belief ; and in proportion as any thing is divided, it is weakened.

Religion, by such means, becomes a thing of form, instead of fact ; of notion, instead of principle ; morality is banished to make room for an imaginary thing, called faith, and this faith has its origin in a supposed debauchery ; a man is preached instead of God ; an execution as an object for gratitude ; the preachers daub themselves with the blood, like a troop of assassins, and pretend to admire the brilliancy it gives them ; they preach a humdrum sermon on the merits of the execution ; then praise Jesus Christ for being executed, and condemn the Jews for doing it.

A man, by hearing all their nonsense lumped and preached together, confounds the God of the creation with the imagined God of the Christians, and lives as if there were none.

Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself than this thing called Christianity. Too absurd for belief, too impossible to convince, and too inconsistent for practice, it renders the heart torpid, or produces only atheists and fanatics. As an engine of power, it serves the purpose of despotism ; and as a means of wealth, the avarice of priests ; but so far as respects the good of man in general, it leads to nothing here, or hereafter.

The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in it every evidence of divine originality, is pure and simple deism. It must have been the first, and will probably be the last that man believes. But pure and simple deism does not answer the purpose of despotic government. They

cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it answer the avarice of priests, but by incorporating themselves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the system. It is this that forms the otherwise mysterious connection of church and state; the church humane, and the state tyrannic.

Were a man impressed as fully and as strongly as he ought to be, with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of this belief: he would stand in awe of God, and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it acts alone. This is deism.

But when, according to the Christian Trinitarian scheme, one part of God is represented by a dying man, and another part, called the Holy Ghost, by a flying pigeon, it is impossible that belief can attach itself to such wild conceits.*

It has been the scheme of the Christian church, and of all the other invented systems of religion, to hold man in ignorance of the Creator, as it is of government to hold him in ignorance of his rights. The systems of the one are as false as those of the other, and are calculated for mutual support. The study of theology, as it stands in Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded

on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities; it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing; and admits of no conclusion. Not any thing can be studied as a science, without our being in possession of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the case with Christian theology, it is therefore the study of nothing.

Instead then of studying theology, as is now done, out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we discover there, are eternal, and of divine origin: they are the foundation of all the science that exists in the world, and must be the foundation of theology.

We can know God only through his works. We cannot have a conception of any one attribute, but by following some principle that leads to it. We have only a confused idea of his power, if we have not the means of comprehending something of it's immensity. We can have no idea of his wisdom, but by knowing the order and manner in which it acts. The principles of science lead to this knowledge; for the Creator of man is the Creator of science, and it is through that medium that man can see God, as it were, face to face.

Could a man be placed in a situation, and endowed with power of vision, to behold at one view, and to contemplate deliberately, the struc-

* The book called the book of Matthew, says, chap. iii. ver. 16, that *the Holy Ghost descended in the shape of a dove*. It might as well have said a goose; the creatures are equally harmless, and the one is as much a nonsensical lie as the other. The second of Acts, ver. 2, 3, says, that it descended in a mighty *rustling wind*, in the shape of *cloven tongues*; perhaps it was cloven feet. Such absurd stuff is fit only for tales of witches and wizards.

ture of the universe, to mark the movements of the several planets, the cause of their varying appearances, the unerring order in which they revolve, even to the remotest comet, their connection and dependence on each other, and to know the system of laws, established by the Creator, that governs and regulates the whole; he would then conceive far beyond what any church-theology can teach him, the power, the wisdom, the vastness, the munificence of the Creator: he would then see, that all the knowledge man has of science, and that all the mechanical arts, by which he renders his situation comfortable here, are derived from that source: his mind, exalted by the scene, and convinced by the fact, would increase in gratitude, as it increased in knowledge: his religion or his worship would become united with his improvement as a man: any employment he followed, that had connection with the principles of the creation, as every thing of agriculture, of science, and of the mechanical arts has, would teach him more of God, and of the gratitude he owes him, than any theological Christian sermon he now hears. Great objects inspire great thoughts; great munificence excites great gratitude; but the groveling tales and doctrines of the Bible and the Testament are fit only to excite contempt.

Though man cannot arrive, at least in this life, at the actual scene I have described, he can demonstrate it; because he has knowledge of the principles upon which the creation is constructed. We know that the greatest works can be represented in models, and that the universe can be represented by the same means. The same principles by which we measure an inch, or an acre of ground, will measure to millions in extent. A circle of an inch diameter has the same geometrical properties as a circle that would circumscribe the universe. The same properties of a triangle, that will demonstrate upon paper the course of a ship, will do it on the ocean; and when applied to what are called the heavenly bodies, will ascertain, to a minute, the time of an eclipse, though those bodies are millions of miles distant from us. This knowledge is of divine origin; and it is from the Bible of the creation that man has learned it, and not from the stupid Bible of the church, that teaches man nothing.*

All the knowledge man has of science and of machinery, by the aid of which his existence is rendered comfortable upon earth, and without which he would be scarcely distinguishable in appearance and condition from a common animal, comes from the great machine and structure of the universe. The constant and unwea-

* The Bible-makers have undertaken to give us, in the first chapter of Genesis, an account of the creation; and in doing this, they have demonstrated nothing but their ignorance. They make there to have been three days and three nights, evenings and mornings, before there was any sun; when it is the presence or absence of the sun that is the cause of day and night, and his rising and setting that of morning and evening. Besides, it is a puerile and pitiful idea, to suppose the Almighty to say, *Let there be light*. It is the imperative manner of speaking that a conjurer uses, when he says to his cups and balls, *Presto, be gone*. Longinus calls this expression the *sublime*; and by the same rule, the conjurer is sublime too, for the manner of speaking is expressively and grammatically the same. When authors and critics talk of the sublime, they see not how nearly it borders on the ridiculous. The sublime of the critics, like some parts of Edmund Burke's *sublime and beautiful*, is like a wind-mill just visible in a fog, which imagination might distort into a flying mountain, or an archangel, or a flock of wild geese.

ried observations of our ancestors, upon the movements and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in what are supposed to have been the early ages of the world, have brought this knowledge upon earth. It is not Moses and the prophets, nor Jesus Christ, nor his apostles, that have done it. The Almighty is the great mechanic of the creation, the first philosopher, and original teacher of all science. Let us then learn to reverence our master, and let us not forget the labours of our ancestors.

Had we at this day no knowledge of machinery, and were it possible that man could have a view, as I have before described, of the structure and machinery of the universe, he would soon conceive the idea of constructing some at least of the mechanical works we now have ; and the idea so conceived would progressively advance in practice. Or could a model of the universe, such as is called an orrery, be presented before him, and put in motion, his mind would arrive at the same idea. Such an object, and such a subject, would, whilst it improved him in knowledge useful to himself as a man and a member of society, as well as entertaining, afford far better matter for impressing him with a knowledge of, and a belief in the Creator, and of the reverence and gratitude that man owes to him, than the stupid texts of the Bible and the Testament, from which, be the talents of the preacher what they may, only stupid sermons can be preached. If man must preach, let him preach something that is edifying, and from texts that are known to be true.

The Bible of the creation is inexhaustible in texts. Every part of science, whether connected with the geometry of the universe, with the

systems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text as well for devotion as for philosophy ; for gratitude, as for human improvement. It will, perhaps, be said, that if such a revolution in the system of religion take place, every preacher ought to be a philosopher. *Most certainly*, and every house of devotion a school of science.

It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science, and the right use of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion to supersede and expel the Jewish religion. And to find pretence and admission for these things, they must have supposed his power or his wisdom imperfect, or his will changeable ; and the changeableness of the will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philosopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed, with respect either to the principles of science, or the properties of matter. Why then is it to be supposed they have changed with respect to men ?

I here close the subject. I have shewn, in all the foregoing part of this work, that the Bible and Testament are impositions and forgeries ; and I leave the evidence I have produced in proof of it, to be refuted, if any one can do it ; and I leave the ideas that are suggested in the conclusion of the work, to rest on the mind of the reader ; certain as I am, that when opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally and powerfully prevail.

P A I N E ' s W O R K S .

D I S S E R T A T I O N

ON

F I R S T - P R I N C I P L E S

OF

G O V E R N M E N T .

THERE is no subject more interesting to every man than the subject of government. His security, be he rich or poor, and, in a great measure his prosperity, is connected therewith; it is therefore his interest as well as his duty to make himself acquainted with its principles, and what the practice ought to be.

Every art and science, however imperfectly known at first, has been studied, improved, and brought to what we call perfection, by the progressive labours of succeeding generations; but the science of government has stood still. No improvement has been made in the principle, and scarcely any in the practice, till the American revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the same forms and systems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance still continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle; it is forbidden to investigate their origin or by what right they exist. If

it be asked how has this happened, the answer is easy; they are established on a principle that is false, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithstanding the mystery with which the science of government has been enveloped, for the purpose of enslaving, plundering, and imposing upon mankind, it is of all things the least mysterious and the most easy to be understood. The meanest capacity cannot be at a loss, if it begins its enquiries at the right point. Every art and science has some point, or alphabet, at which the study of that art or science begins, and by the assistance of which the progress is facilitated. The same method ought to be observed with respect to the science of government.

Instead then of embarrassing the subject in the outset with the numerous subdivisions, under which different forms of government have been classed, such as aristocracy, democra-

cy, oligarchy, monarchy, &c. the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary divisions, or those under which all the several subdivisions will be comprehended.

The primary divisions are but two.

First, government by election and representation.

Secondly, government by hereditary succession.

All the several forms and systems of government, however numerous or diversified, class themselves under one or other of those primary divisions; for either they are on the system of representation, or on that of hereditary succession. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, such as the late government of Holland, and the present government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, because the parts separately considered are either representative or hereditary.

Beginning then our enquiries at this point, we have first to examine into the nature of those two primary divisions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonstratively better than the other, that difference directs our choice; but if one of them should be so absolutely false as not to have a right to existence, the matter settles itself at once; because a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now spreading themselves in the world have their origin in this state of the case, and the present war is a conflict between the representative system, founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary system, founded in usurpation. As to what are called Mo-

narchy, Royalty, and Aristocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, sufficiently describe the hereditary system; they are but secondary things or signs of the hereditary system, and which fall of themselves if that system has not a right to exist. Were there no such terms as Monarchy, Royalty, and Aristocracy, or were other terms substituted in their place, the hereditary system, if it continued, would not be altered thereby. It would be the same system under any other titular name as it is now.

The character therefore of the revolutions of the present day distinguishes itself most definitively by grounding itself on the system of representative government, in opposition to the hereditary. No other distinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the case generally, I proceed, in the first place, to examine the hereditary system, because it has the priority in point of time. The representative system is the invention of the modern world; and that no doubt may arise as to my own opinion, I declare it before-hand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid more mathematically true, than that hereditary government has not a right to exist. When therefore we take from any man the exercise of hereditary power, we take away that which he never had the right to possess, and which no law or custom could, or ever can, give him a title to.*

The arguments that have hitherto been employed against the hereditary system have been chiefly founded upon the absurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purpose of good government. Nothing can present to our judgment, or to our imagination,

a figure of greater absurdity than that of seeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does into the hands of a lad necessarily destitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an insult to every man of years, of character, and of talent, in a country. The moment we begin to reason upon the hereditary system it falls into desision; let but a single idea begin and a thousand will soon follow. Insignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character; in fine, every defect, serious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary system as a figure of ridicule. Leaving however the ridiculousness of the thing to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the question, namely, whether such a system has a right to exist?

To be satisfied of the right of a thing to exist, we must be satisfied that it had a right to begin. If it had not a right to begin, it has not a right to continue. By what right then did the hereditary system begin? Let a man but ask himself this question, and he will find that he cannot satisfy himself with an answer.

The right which any man, or any family had to set itself up at first to govern a nation, and to establish itself hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robespierre had to do the same thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much; for it is impossible to discover superiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary government could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robespierres, the Marats, are all on the same standing as to the question of right. It belongs exclusively to none.

It is one step towards liberty, to perceive that hereditary government

could not begin as an exclusive right in any family. The next point will be, whether, having once began, it could grow into a right by the influence of time?

This would be supposing an absurdity; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it superior to principle; whereas time has no more connection with, or influence upon principle, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thousand years ago, is as much a wrong as if it began to-day; and the right which originates to-day, is as much a right as if it had the sanction of a thousand years. Time with respect to principles is an eternal NOW: it has no operation upon them: it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thousand years. Our life-time is but a short portion of that period, and if we find the wrong in existence as soon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us; and our right to resist it, is the same as if it had never existed before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exist in a nation a right to set it up and establish it by what is called law, as has been done in England? I answer NO; and that any law or any constitution made for that purpose is an act of treason against the rights of every minor in the nation, at the time it is made, and against the rights of all succeeding generations. I shall speak upon each of those cases. First, of the minor, at the time such law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation in a collective sense, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from just born to just dying. Of these, one part will be minors, and the other aged. The average of life is not exactly the same in every climate and country, but in general the minority in years are the majority in numbers, that is, the number of persons under twenty-one years, is greater than the number of persons above that age. This difference in number is not necessary to the establishment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it serves to shew the justice of it more strongly. The principle would be equally good, if the majority in years were also the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as sacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different age of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights; the rights are the same rights; and are to be preserved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they shall come of age. During the minority of minors their rights are under the sacred guardianship of the aged. The minor cannot surrender them; the guardian cannot dispossess him; consequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the lawmakers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life, are but a few years a-head of those who are yet minors, and to whom they must shortly give place, have not, and cannot have the right to make a law to set up and establish hereditary government, or, to speak more distinctly, *an hereditary succession of governors*; because it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time such a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he shall come of age, and to subjugate him to a system of govern-

ment, to which, during his minority, he could neither consent nor object.

If a person, who is a minor at the time such a law is proposed, had happened to have been born a few years sooner, so as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of proposing it, his right to have objected against it, to have exposed the injustice and tyrannical principles of it, and to have voted against it, will be admitted on all sides. If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exercising the same rights after he comes of age as he would have had a right to exercise had he been of age at the time, it is, undeniably, a law to take away and annul the rights of every person in the nation who shall be a minor at the time of making such a law, and consequently the right to make it cannot exist.

I come now to speak of government by hereditary succession as it applies to succeeding generations; and to shew that in this case, as in the case of minors, there does not exist in a nation a right to set it up.

A nation, though continually existing, is continually in a state of renewal and succession. It is never stationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old persons from the stage. In this ever-running flood of generations there is no part superior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of superiority in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cause are we to ascribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it? A single reflection will teach us that our ancestors, like ourselves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-absolute

was not in them, it is not in us, it belongs to the whole family of man, through all ages. If we think otherwise than this, we think either as slaves or as tyrants. As slaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the subject, to endeavour to define what is to be understood by a generation in the sense the word is here used.

As a natural term its meaning is sufficiently clear. The father, the son, the grandson, are so many distinct generations. But when we speak of a generation as describing the persons in whom legal authority resides, as distinct from another generation of the same description who are to succeed them, it comprehends all those who are above the age of twenty-one years, at the time we count from; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who shall have arrived at age, shall be greater than the number of persons remaining of the former stock.

For example, if France at this or any other moment, contain twenty-four millions of souls, twelve millions will be males, and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, six millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and six will be under, and the authority to govern will reside in the first six. But every day will make some alteration, and in twenty-one years every one of those minors who survive will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former stock will be gone; the majority of persons then living, in whom the

legal authority resides, will be composed of those who, twenty-one years before, had no legal existence. Those will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and in the next twenty-one years, (or less) another race of minors, arrived at age, will succeed them, and so on.

As this is ever the case, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it consequently follows, that there cannot be a right in any to establish government by hereditary succession, because it would be supposing itself possessed of a right superior to the rest, namely, that of commanding by its own authority how the world shall be hereafter governed, and who shall govern it. Every age and generation is and must be (as a matter of right) as free to act for itself in all cases, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the first part of *Rights of Man* I have spoken of government by hereditary succession; and I will here close the subject with an extract from that work, which states it under the two following heads.

“First, of the right of any family to establish itself with hereditary power.

“Secondly, of the right of a nation to establish a particular family.

“With respect to the first of those heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority independent of the nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism, and it would be

trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

“ But the second head, that of a nation; that is, of a generation for the time being, establishing a particular family with hereditary powers, it does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward, even but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see, that hereditary succession becomes the same despotism to others, which the first persons reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism.

“ In order to see this matter more clearly, let us consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with hereditary powers, separately from the generations which are to follow.

“ The generation which first selects a person and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other nominal distinction, acts its own choice, as a free agent for itself, be that choice wise or foolish. The person so set up is *not hereditary*, but selected and appointed; and the generation which sets him up does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice. Were the person so set up, and the generation who sets him up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary succession, and of consequence, hereditary succession could only follow on the death of the first parties.

“ As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have next prin-

to consider the character in which that generation acts towards the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

“ It assumes a character to which it has neither right nor title; for it changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make a will and testament which is to have operation, after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as already observed, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and from all future ones, the right and free agency by which itself acted.

“ In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is both criminal and absurd. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary succession by law operates. A certain generation makes a will, under the form of a law, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and of all future generations, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and assumes the government in consequence of that illicit conveyance.”

The history of the English parliament furnishes an example of this kind; and which merits to be recorded, as being the greatest instance of legislative ignorance and want of

ciple that is to be found in the history of any country. The case is as follows:

The English parliament of 1688 imported a man and his wife from Holland, *William and Mary*, and made them king and queen of England. Having done this, the said parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words, "We, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the people of England, most humbly and faithfully submit *ourselves, our heirs, and posterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and posterities*, for ever." And in a subsequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the said parliament, in the name of the people of England then living, *binds the said people, their heirs and posterities, to William and Mary, their heirs and posterities, to the end of time.*

It is not sufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of such law-makers, it is necessary that we reprobate their want of principle. The constituent assembly of France (1789) fell into the same vice as the parliament of England had done, and assumed to establish an hereditary succession in the family of the Capets, as an act of the constitution of that year. That every nation, *for the time being*, has a right to govern itself as it pleases, must always be admitted, but government by hereditary succession is government for another race of people, and not for itself; and as those on whom it is to operate are not yet in existence, or are minors, so neither is the right in existence to set it up for them, and to assume such a right is treason against the right of posterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by he-

reditary succession; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government* in contradistinction to *hereditary government*.

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has not a right to exist, and that it has not is proveable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation we amuse not ourselves in enquiring when or how, or by what right it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the origin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title-deed.

The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more, in the choice of representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting or of electing and being elected than the poor have to exclude the rich; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed, on either side, it is a question of force, and not of right. Who is he that would exclude another?—That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy implies an inequality of rights; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality? Will the rich exclude themselves? No! Will the poor exclude themselves? No! By what right then can any be excluded? It would be a question, if any man, or class of men, have a right to exclude themselves; but be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate

such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery. Personal rights, of which the right of voting representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind; and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him, to dispossess or rob another of his property of rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it be made an article of a constitution, or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or much, it is a combination of the persons possessing that quantity, to exclude those who do not possess the same quantity. It is investing themselves with powers as a self-created part of society, to the exclusion of the rest.

It is always to be taken for granted, that those who oppose an equality of rights, never mean the exclusion should take place on themselves; and in this view of the case, pardoning the vanity of the thing, aristocracy is a subject of laughter. This self-soothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not less selfish, which is, that the opposers conceive they are playing a safe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to lose; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than those whom they oppose and would exclude,

they shall not have less. This opinion has already been fatal to thousands who, not contented with *equal rights*, have sought more till they lost all, and experienced in themselves the degrading *inequality* they endeavoured to fix upon others.

In any view of the case it is dangerous and impolitic, sometimes ridiculous, and always unjust, to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the sum, or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be considerable, it will exclude a majority of the people, and unite them in a common interest against the government and against those who support it, and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn such a government and its supporters whenever they please.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a small quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, it exhibits liberty in disgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and insignificance. When a brood-mare shall fortunately produce a foal or a mule, that by being worth the sum in question, shall convey to its owner the right of voting; or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of such a right exist? Is it in the man, or in the mule? When we consider how many ways property may be acquired without merit, and lost without a crime, we ought to spurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offensive part of the case is, that this exclusion from the right of voting implies a stigma on the moral character of the persons excluded; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circum-

stance can justify it; wealth is no proof of moral character; nor poverty of the want of it. On the contrary, wealth is often the presumptive evidence of dishonesty; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If therefore property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired, ought to be made a criterion also.

The only ground upon which exclusion from the right of voting is consistent with justice, would be to inflict it as a punishment for a certain time upon those who should propose to take away that right from others. The right of voting for representatives is the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to a state of slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives, is in this case. The proposal therefore to disfranchise any class of men is as criminal as the proposal to take away property. When we speak of right, we ought always to unite with it the idea of duties: right becomes duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another, and he to me; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the case, the strength and permanent security of government is in proportion to the number of people interested in supporting it. The true policy therefore is to interest the whole by an equality of rights, for the danger arises from exclusions. It is possible to exclude men from the right of voting, but it is impossible to exclude them from

the right of rebelling against that exclusion; and when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be persuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain class of men, or that government was a thing existing in right of itself, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the superstition in which they were instructed, furnished the means of doing it; but when the ignorance is gone, and the superstition with it; when they perceive the imposition that has been acted upon them; when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exists in the world, beyond what nature spontaneously produces; when they begin to feel their consequence by their usefulness, and their right as members of society, it is then no longer possible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be reacted. To attempt it is to provoke derision, or invite destruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Industry, superiority of talents, dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortunate opportunities, or the opposite, or the mean of those things, will ever produce that effect without having recourse to the harsh ill-sounding names of avarice and oppression; and beside this, there are some men who, though they do not despise wealth, will not stoop to the drudgery of the means of acquiring it, nor will be troubled with the care of it, beyond their wants or their independence; whilst in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not punishable; it makes the sole business of their lives, and they

follow it as a religion. *All that is required with respect to property is to obtain it honestly, and not employ it criminally; but it is always criminally employed, when it is made a criterion for exclusive rights.*

In institutions that are purely pecuniary, such as that of a bank or a commercial company, the rights of the members composing that company are wholly created by the property they invest therein; and no other rights are represented in the government of that company, than what arise out of that property; neither has that government cognizance of *any thing but property.*

But the case is totally different with respect to the institution of civil government, organized on the system of representation. Such a government has cognizance of *every thing* and of *every man* as a member of the national society, whether he has property or not; and therefore the principle requires that *every man* and *every kind of right* be represented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the most essential kind. The protection of a man's person is more sacred than the protection of property; and besides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or service by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintains his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him; he has acquired it; and it is as much the object of his protection, as exterior property, possessed without that faculty, can be the object of protection to another person.

I have always believed that the best security for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every part of the community, as far as can possibly be done, every cause of complaint,

and every motive to violence; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are secure, property is secure in consequence. But when property is made a pretence for unequal or exclusive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult, for it is unnatural to believe that property can be secure under the guarantee of a society injured in its rights by the influence of that property.

Next to the injustice and ill-policy of making property a pretence for exclusive rights, is the unaccountable absurdity of giving to mere *sound* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain rights; for what else is a *title* but *sound*. Nature is often giving to the world some extraordinary men who arrive at fame by merit and universal consent, such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, &c. These were truly great or noble. But when government sets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as absurd, as if she undertook to manufacture wise men. *Her nobles are all counterfeits.*

This wax-work order has assumed the name of aristocracy; and the disgrace of it would be lessened if it could be considered only as childish imbecility. We pardon foppery because of its insignificance, and on the same ground we might pardon the foppery of Titles. But the origin of aristocracy was worse than foppery. It was robbery. *The first aristocrats in all countries were brigands.* Those of latter times, sycophants.

It is very well known that in England, (and the same will be found in other countries) the great landed estates now held in descent were plundered from the quiet inhabitants at the conquests. The possibility did not exist of acquiring such estates ho-

neftly. If it be asked how they could have been acquired, no answer but that of robbery can be given. That they were not acquired by trade, by commerce, by manufactures, by agriculture, or by any reputable employment is certain. How then were they acquired? Blush aristocracy to hear your origin, for your progenitors were Thieves. They were the Robespierres and the Jacobins of that day. When they had committed the robbery, they endeavoured to lose the disgrace of it, by sinking their real names under fictitious ones, which they called Titles. It is ever the practice of Felons to act in this manner. They never pass by their real names.

As property honestly obtained is best secured by an equality of rights, so ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property, will next endeavour to disarm him of his rights, to secure that property; for when the robber becomes the legislator he believes himself secure. That part of the government of England that is called the house of lords was originally composed of persons who had committed the robberies of which I have been speaking. It was an association for the protection of the property they had stolen.

But besides the criminality of the origin of aristocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and physical character of man. Like slavery, it debilitates the human faculties; for as the mind, bowed down by slavery, loses in silence its elastic powers, so, in the contrary extreme, when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impossible that a mind employed upon ribbands

and titles can never be great. The childishness of the objects consumes the man.

It is at all times necessary, and more particularly so during the progress of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themselves by habit, that we frequently refresh our patriotism by reference to first principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them; and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them.

An enquiry into the origin of rights will demonstrate to us that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another; for who is he who could be the first giver, or by what principle, or on what authority, could he possess the right of giving? A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifest of the principle by which they exist, followed by a detail of what the rights are; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of those rights from man to man. As therefore it is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man, it consequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his existence only, and must therefore be equal to every man. The principle of an *equality of rights* is clear and simple. Every man can understand it, and it is by understanding his rights that he learns his duties; for where the rights of men are equal, every man must finally see the necessity of protecting the rights of others as the most effectual security for his own. But if in the formation of a constitution we depart from the prin-

ciple of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to stop? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to stop at, that shall discriminate between men of the same country, part of whom shall be free, and the rest not? If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, because it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is moreover holding up property as an apple of discord, and not only exciting but justifying war against it; for I maintain the principle that when property is used as an instrument to take away the rights of those who may happen not to possess property, it is used to an unlawful purpose, as fire-arms would be in a similar case.

In a state of nature all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power; the weak cannot protect himself against the strong. This being the case, the institution of civil society is for the purpose of making an equalization of powers that shall be parallel to, and a guarantee of the equality of rights. The laws of a country when properly constructed apply to this purpose. Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own; and therefore every man has an equal right in the formation of the government and of the laws by which he is to be governed and judged. In extensive countries and societies, such as America and France, this right, in the individual can only be exercised by delegation, that is, by election and representation; and hence it is that the

institution of representative government arises.

Hitherto I have confined myself to matters of principle only. First, that hereditary government has not a right to exist; that it cannot be established on any principle of right; and that it is a violation of all principle. Secondly, that government by election and representation has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man; for whether a man be his own law-giver, as he would be in a state of nature; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power; the second, is practicable only in democracies of small extent; the third is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle*, are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian but not the giver. And as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual, in matters of government, cannot be exercised but by election and representation; it consequently follows, that the only system of government, consistent with principle, where simple democracy is

impracticable, is the representative system. But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion*. It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights*; and so long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part that falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights; for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*, but no man has a right that his opinion should *govern the rest*. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known before-hand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other. All the disorders that have arisen in France during the progress of the revolution have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority, but by the minority, and *that minority has been composed of men possessing property, as well as of men without property; property therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights*. It will sometimes hap-

pen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as soon as experience proves this to be the case, the minority will increase to a majority, and the error will reform itself by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing therefore can justify an insurrection, neither can it ever be necessary, where rights are equal and opinions free.

Taking then the principle of equal rights as the foundation of the revolution, and consequently of the constitution, the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of the government shall be arranged in the constitution, will, as is already said, fall within the province of opinion.

Various methods will present themselves upon a question of this kind, and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the best, it has, I think, sufficiently decided which is the worst. That is the worst, which in its deliberations and decisions is subject to the precipitancy and passion of an individual; and when the whole legislature is crowded into one body, it is an individual in mass. In all cases of deliberation it is necessary to have a corps of reserve, and it would be better to divide the representation by lot into two parts, and let them revise and correct each other, than that the whole should sit together and debate at once.

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion or future experience shall best direct. As to that *hospital of incurables* (as Chester-

field calls it) the British house of peers, it is an excrescence growing out of corruption ; and there is no more affinity or resemblance between any of the branches of a legislative body originating from the right of the people, and the aforesaid house of peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is necessary in the first place to fix a precise meaning to the word.

There are but two divisions into which power can be arranged. First, that of willing or decreeing the laws ; secondly, that of executing, or putting them in practice. The former corresponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind, which reasons and determines what shall be done ; the second, to the mechanical powers of the human body, that puts that determination into practice. If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a state of imbecility ; and if the latter acts without the predetermination of the former, it is a state of lunacy. The executive department therefore is official, and is subordinate to the legislative, as the body is to the mind in a state of health ; for it is impossible to conceive the idea of two sovereignties, a sovereignty to *will*, and a sovereignty to *act*. The executive is not invested with the power of deliberating whether it shall act or not ; it has no discretionary authority in the case : for it can *act no other thing* than what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto ; and in this view of the case, the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which, that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *some kind of authority* is necessary

to *superintend* the execution of the laws, and to see that they are faithfully performed ; and it is by confounding this superintending authority with the official execution, that we get embarrassed about the term *executive power*.—All the parts in the governments of the united states of America that are called the EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to superintend the execution of the laws ; and they are so far independent of the legislative, that they know the legislative only through the laws, and cannot be controuled or directed by it through any other medium.

In what manner this superintending authority shall be appointed or composed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method and some another ; and in all cases, where opinion only and not principle is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all. There are however some things deducible from reason, and evinced by experience, that serve to guide our decision upon the case. The one is, never to invest any individual with extraordinary power ; for besides his being tempted to misuse it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for the office. Secondly, never to invest power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniences that may be supposed to accompany frequent changes, are less to be feared than the danger that arises from long continuance.

I shall conclude this discourse with offering some observations on the means of *preserving liberty* ; for it is not only necessary that we establish it, but that we preserve it.

It is, in the first place, necessary that we distinguish between the means made use of to overthrow despotism, in order to prepare the way for the esta-

blishment of liberty, and the means to be used after the despotism is overthrown.

The means made use of in the first case are justified by necessity. Those means are in general insurrections; for whilst the established government of despotism continues in any country it is scarcely possible that any other means can be used. It is also certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themselves a *discretionary exercise of power* regulated more by circumstances than by principle, which were the practice to continue, liberty would never be established, or if established would soon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution that every man is to change his opinion at the same moment. There never yet was any truth or any principle so irresistibly obvious, that all men believed it at once. Time and reason must co-operate with each other to the final establishment of any principle; and therefore those who may happen to be first convinced have no right to persecute others, on whom conviction operates more slowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to instruct; not to destroy.

Had a constitution been established two years ago (as ought to have been done) the violences that have since de-

olated France, and injured the character of the revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But instead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either principle or authority, was substituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotism one day became treason the next. All these things have followed from the want of a constitution; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and controul the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, *THUS FAR SHALT THOU GO AND NO FARTHER*. But in the absence of a constitution men look entirely to party; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret, and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE END.

A P P E N D I X.

T R I A L

OF

T H O M A S P A I N E.

Court of KING's BENCH, Guildhall, London, DECEMBER 18, 1792.

Before the RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD KENYON.

[It has been considered unnecessary to insert the Information, as it was in the usual form.]

S P E C I A L J U R Y.

J O H N C A M P B E L L, J O H N L I G H T F O O T, C H R I S T O P H E R T A D D Y, R O B E R T O L I P H A N T, C O R N E L I U S D O N O V A N, R O B E R T R O L L E S T O N, J O H N L U B B O C K, R I C H A R D T U C K W E L L, W I L L I A M P O R T E R, T H O M A S D R U C E, I S A A C R A I L T O N, H E N R Y E V A N S.

Counsel for the Crown.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL,
The SOLICITOR GENERAL,
Mr. BEARCROFT,
Mr. BALDWIN,
Mr. WOOD,
Mr. PERCIVAL.

Solicitors.

Mess. CHAMBERLAYNE and WHITE.

Counsel for the Defendant.

The Hon. THOMAS ERSKINE,
Mr. PIGGOT,
Mr. SHEPHERD,
Mr. FITZGERALD,
Mr. F. VAUGHAN.

Solicitor.

Mr. BONNEY.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Gentlemen of the Jury. You will permit me to solicit, and for no long space of time, in the present stage of this business, somewhat of your attention to a cause which, considering it on its own merits only, is, in my humble judgment, a plain, a clear, a short, and indisputable case. Were it not, Gentlemen, that certain circumstances have rendered it a case of more expectation than ordinary, I do assure you that I should literally have contented myself this day with conducting myself in the manner that I did upon the last occasion that I was called upon to address a Jury upon this sort of subject, namely, by simply reading to you the passages which I have selected, and leaving it entirely to your judgment. But, Gentlemen, it so happens that the accumulated mischief which has arisen from the particular book that is now before you, and the consequences, which every body is acquainted with, which have followed from this publication, have rendered it necessary, perhaps, that I should say a few words more in the opening than it would have been my intention to have done, had it not been for those circumstances.

Gentlemen, in the first place you will permit me, without the imputation, I think, of speaking of myself, (a very trifling subject, and always a disgusting one to others) to obviate a rumour which I have heard, namely, that this prosecution does not correspond with my private judgment; that has been said, and has reached my ears from various quarters. The refutation that I shall give to it is this: That I should think I deserved to be with disgrace expelled from the situation with which his Majesty has honoured me in your service, and that of all my fellow subjects, had I as far as my private judgment goes, hesitated for one instant to bring this enormous offender, as I consider him, before a Jury of his country.

Gentlemen, the publication in question was not the first of its kind which this defendant sent forth into the world. This particular publication was preceded by one upon the same subjects, and handling, in some measure, the same topics. That publication, although extremely reprehensible, and such as, perhaps, I was not entirely warranted in overlooking, I did overlook, upon this principle, that it may not be fitting and prudent at all times, for a public prosecutor to be sharp in his prosecutions, or to have it said that he is instrumental in preventing any manner of discussion coming under the public eye, although in his own estimation it may be very far indeed from that which is legitimate and proper for discussion. Reprehensible as that book was, extremely so in my opinion, yet it was ushered into the world under circumstances that led me to conceive that it would be confined to the judicious reader, and when confined to the judicious reader, it appeared to be that such a man would refute as he went along.

But, gentlemen, when I found that another publication was ushered into the world still more reprehensible than the former, that in all shapes, in all sizes, with an industry incredible; it was either totally or partially thrust into the hands of all persons in this country, of subjects of every description; when I found that even children's sweetmeats were wrapped up with parts of this, and delivered into their hands, in the hope that they would read it, when all industry was used, such as I describe to you, in order to obtrude and force this upon that part of the public whose minds cannot be supposed to be conversant with subjects of this sort, and who cannot therefore correct as they go along, I thought it behoved me upon the earliest occasion, which was the first day of the term succeeding this publication, to put a charge upon record against its author.

Now, gentlemen, permit me to state to you what it is that I impute to this book, and what is the intention that I impute to the writer of this book. Try it by every test that the human mind can possibly suggest, and see whether when tried by all the variety of those tests, you will not be satisfied in the long run, that it does deserve that description which my duty obliges me to give of it.

Gentlemen, in the first place I impute to it a wilful, deliberate intention to vilify and degrade, and thereby to bring into abhorrence and contempt, the whole constitution of the government of this country; not as *introduced*, that I will never admit, but as *explained* and *restored* at the Revolution. That system of government under which we this day live, and which if it shall be attacked by contemptuous expressions, if by dogmatical dicta, if by ready-made propositions, offered to the understandings of men solicitous about the nature of their constitution, properly so, (God forbid they ever should be otherwise) but who, at the same time, may be easily imposed upon to their own destruction, they may be brought to have diffidence and even abhorrence (for this book goes all that length) of that which is the salvation of the public, and every thing which is dear to them.

I impute then to this book a deliberate design to eradicate from the minds of the people of this country that enthusiastic love which they have hitherto

had for that constitution, and thereby to do the utmost work of mischief that any human being can do in this society.

Gentlemen, further I impute to it that, *in terms*, the regal part of the government of this country, bounded and limited as it is, is represented as an oppressive and an abominable tyranny.

Thirdly. That the whole legislature of this country is directly an usurpation.

Again, with respect to the laws of this realm, which hitherto have been our boast, indiscriminately and without one single exception, that they are grounded upon this usurped authority, and are therefore in themselves null, or, to use his own words—that there is little or no law in this country.

Then, Gentlemen, is it to be held out to a community of ten or twelve millions of people, is it to be held out, as well to the lower as to the better informed classes of these ten or twelve millions, that there is nothing in this society that is binding upon their conduct, excepting such portion of religion or morality as they may individually entertain?

Gentlemen, are we then a lawless banditti? Have we neither laws to secure our property, our persons, or our reputations?—Is it so that every man's arms are unbound, and that he may do whatever he pleases in the society?—Are we reduced back again to that savage state of nature? I ask you the question! You, gentlemen, know well what the answer is; but, gentlemen, are we to say, that a man who holds this out to those who are not furnished with the means of giving the answer which I know you, and every gentleman who hears me at this moment, will give, is discussing a question? Can any thing add to his slander upon the constitution; and upon the separate parts of the government, so constituted as ours is, more than that sweeping imputation upon the whole system of law that binds us together—namely, that it is null and void, and that there is in reality no such thing to be found?

Gentlemen, in the several passages which I shall read to you, I impute this to him; also, that he uses an artifice gross to those who can observe it, but dangerous in the extreme to those whose minds perhaps are not sufficiently cultivated and habituated to reading to enable them to discover it: the artifice, in order to create disgust, is neither more nor less than this—it is stating all the objections that can possibly be urged to monarchy, separately and solely considered, and to pure and simple aristocracy; he never chuses to say a single syllable with respect to those two as combined with a democracy, forbearing also to state, and industriously keeping out of the way, every circumstance that regards that worst of all governments, an unbalanced democracy, which is necessarily pregnant with a democratical tyranny. This is the gross artifice; and when you come to dissect the book in the careful manner that I have done, I believe you and every other reader will easily detect that artifice.

Gentlemen, to whom are the positions that are contained in this book addressed? They are addressed, gentlemen, to the ignorant, to the credulous, to the desperate; to the desperate all government is irksome, nothing can be so palatable to their ears as the comfortable doctrine that there is neither law nor government amongst us.

The ignorant and the credulous, we all know, to exist in all countries, and perhaps exactly in proportion as their hearts are good and simple, are they an easy prey to the crafty who have the cruelty to deceive them.

Gentlemen, in judging of the malignant intention which I must impute to this author, you will be pleased to take into your consideration the phrase and the manner as well as the matter. The phrase I state to be insidious and artful, the manner in many instances scoffing and contemptuous, a short argument, often a prevalent one, with the ignorant or the credulous. With respect to the *matter*, in my conscience I call it treason, though technically,

according to the laws of the country, it is not;—for, gentlemen, balance the inconvenience to society of that which is technically treason, and in this country, we must not, thank God, extend it but keep it within its most narrow and circumscribed definitions, but consider the comparative difference of the mischief that may happen from spreading doctrines of this sort, and that which may happen from any treason whatever.

In the case of the utmost degree of treason, even perpetrating the death of a prince upon the throne, the law has found the means of supplying that calamity in a manner that may save the country from any permanent injury. In many periods of the history of this country, which you may easily recollect, it is true that the reign of a good prince has been interrupted by violence,—a great evil!—but not so great as this: the chasm is filled up instantly by the constitution of this country, even if that last of treasons should be committed.

But where is the power upon earth that can fill up the chasm of a constitution that has been growing;—not for seven hundred years, as Mr. Paine would have you believe, from the Norman conquest, but from time almost eternal, impossible to trace; that has been growing as, from the symptoms Julius Cæsar observed when he found our ancestors nearly savages in the country, has been growing from that period until it was consummated at the Revolution, and shone forth in all its splendour.

In addition to this, this gentleman thinks fit even to impute to the existence of that constitution, such as I have described it, the very evils inseparable from human society, or even from human nature itself; all these are imputed to that scandalous, that wicked, that usurped constitution under which we, the subjects of this country, have hitherto mistakenly conceived that we lived happy and free.

Gentlemen, I apprehend it to be no very difficult operation of the human mind to distinguish reasoning and well meant discussion from a deliberate design to calumniate the law and constitution under which we live, and to withdraw men's allegiance from that constitution; it is the operation of good sense: it is therefore no difficult operation for a jury of the City of London: therefore you will be pleased to observe whether the whole of this book, I should rather say, such part as I am at present at liberty to advert to, is not of this description, that it is by no means calculated to discuss and to convince, but to perform the shorter process of inflammation; not to reason upon any subject, but to dictate; and, gentlemen, as I stated to you before, to dictate in such a manner, and in such a phrase, and with all such circumstances as cannot, in my humble apprehension, leave the most remote doubt upon your minds of what was passing in the heart of that man who composed that book.

Gentlemen, you will permit me now to say a word or two upon those passages, which I have selected to you, first describing a little what those passages are. I have thought it much more becoming, much more beneficial to the public, than any other course that I could take, to select six or seven, and no more, (not wishing to load the record unnecessarily) of those passages that go to the very root of our constitution, that is the nature of the passages which I have selected, and gentlemen, the first of them is in page 192, where you will find this doctrine.

“ All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny, an heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.”

Now, gentlemen, what is the tendency of this passage? “ All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny.” So that no qualification whatever, not even the subordination to the law of the country, which is the only para-

mount thing that we know of in this country, can take it out of the description of tyranny; the regal office being neither more nor less than a trust executed for the subjects of this country; the person who fills the regal office being understood, in this country, to be neither more nor less than the chief executive magistrate heading the whole gradation of magistracy.

But without any qualification he states it roundly, that under all circumstances whatever hereditary government must in its nature be tyranny; what is that but to hold out to the people of this country that they are nought but slaves; to be sure, if they are living under a tyranny, it is impossible to draw any other consequence.

This is one of those short propositions that are crammed down the throat of every man that is accessible to their arts in this country; this is one of those propositions, which, if he believes, must have the due effect upon his mind, of saying, the case is come when I understand I am oppressed, I can bear it no longer.

“An heritable crown.” Ours is an heritable crown, and there it is comprehended in this dogma: “Or by what other fanciful name such things may be called.” Is that discussion? Contemptuous, vilifying, and degrading expressions of that sort are applied to that which we are accustomed to look to with reverence, namely, the representation of the whole body of magistracy and of the law—“have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property.—To inherit a government is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.”

Why, gentlemen, are the people of England to be told, without further ceremony, that they are inherited by a king of this country, and that they are precisely in the case of sheep and oxen? I leave you to judge if such gross, contemptible, and abominable falsehood is delivered out in bits and scraps of this sort, whether that does not call aloud for punishment?

Gentlemen, only look at the truth; the converse is directly the case. The King of this country inherits an office under the law; he does not inherit persons; we are not in a state of villenage; the direct reverse to what is here pointed out is the truth of the matter; the King inherits an office, but as to any inheritance of his people, none, you know, belongs to him, and I am ashamed to say any thing more upon it.

The next is in page 204, in which this man is speaking of the Congress at Philadelphia in 1787, which was held because the government of that country was found to be extremely defective as at first established.

“This Convention met at Philadelphia, in May, 1787, of which General Washington was elected president; he was not at that time connected with any of the State-governments or with Congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

“The Convention went deeply into all the subjects, and having after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal Constitution, the next question was the manner of giving it authority and practice.”

What is the conclusion of that—they certainly agreed upon an appointment of their federal Constitution in 1787. I should have thought that a man, meaning nothing more than history, would have been very well contented to have stated what actually did happen upon that occasion; but, in order to discuss (as possibly it may be called) something that formerly did pass in this country, he chose to do it in these inflaming and contemptuous terms.

“For this purpose they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch Stadtholder or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.”

Here again the revolution and the act of settlement stare us in the face, as if the interest and the sense of the country were in no way consulted; but, on

the contrary, it was nothing more than a mere cabal of courtiers.—Whether that is or is not to be endured in this country, your verdict will shew: but, in order to shew you how totally unnecessary this passage was, except for the deliberate purpose of calumny; if this passage had been left out, the narration would have been quite perfect. I will read three or four lines just to shew how perfect it would have been:—“The next question was about the manner of giving it authority and practice.” The passage beyond that which I call a libel,—“They first directed that the proposed Constitution should be published; secondly, that each State should elect a Convention, for the purpose of taking it into consideration, and of ratifying or rejecting;” and so the story goes on—but, in order to explain what I mean by a dogma thrust in, I call your attention to this, as one of those which has no earthly connexion with the subject he was then speaking of.

Does not this passage stand insulated between the two parts of the connected story officiously and designedly thrust in for the purposes of mischief? Gentlemen, the artifice of that book consists also in this; the different wicked passages that are meant to do mischief in this country, are spread throughout it, and stuck in here and there, in a manner that in order to see the whole malignity of it, it is necessary to have a recollection of several preceding passages; but these passages when brought together manifestly shew the full design of the writer, and therefore extracts of it may be made to contain the whole marrow; and at the same time that each passage, taken by itself, will do mischief enough, any man reading them together, will see that mischief come out much clearer than by a mere transient reading.

The next passage I have to observe upon is in page 206, and he is pleased to express himself in this manner: he says,

“The history of the Edwards and the Henrys, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had restricted it; the Stuarts endeavoured to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all these instances we see nothing of a Constitution, but only of restrictions on assumed power.”

Then, gentlemen, from the reign of the Edwards and the Henrys down to the Revolution, it was a regular progression of tyranny, not a progression of liberty but of tyranny, till the Stuarts stepped a little beyond the line in the gradation that was going forwards, and that begot a necessity for a revolution; but of the Edwards I should have thought, at least, he might have spared the founder of our jurisprudence, King Edward the First, beside many other Princes, the glory and the boast of this country, and many of them regards of its freedom and Constitution; but instead of that, this author would have the people of this country believe that up to that time it was a progressive tyranny, and that there was nothing of a Constitution, only restrictions on assumed power;—so that all the power that existed at that time was assumption and usurpation.

He thus proceeds “After this another William descended from the same stock, and claiming from the same origin, gained possession, and of the two evils, James and William, the nation preferred what it thought the least.” So that the deliverance of this country by the Prince of Orange was an evil, but the least of the two, “Since from circumstances it must take one. The act called the Bill of Rights comes here into view: What is it but a bargain which the parts of the government made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges? You shall have so much, and I will have the rest; and with respect to the nation it said, *for your share you shall have the right of petitioning*. This being the case, the Bill of Rights is more properly a BILL OF WRONGS AND OF INSULT. As to what is called the Convention Parliament, it was a thing that made itself, and then made the autho-

“ rity by which it acted ; a few persons got together, and called themselves
 “ by that name ; several of them had never been elected, and none of them
 “ for the purpose.”

“ From the time of William a species of government arose, issuing out of
 “ this coalition Bill of Rights, and more so since the corruption introduced
 “ at the Hanover succession by the agency of Walpole, that can be described
 “ by no other name than a despotic legislation.”

Now, gentlemen, this is the description that this man holds out of that on which rests the property, the lives, and liberties, and the privileges of the people of this country. I wonder to God, gentlemen, that any British man (for such this man certainly was, and still is) to use the words of our own Poet, when he spoke these words, *A BILL OF WRONGS, A BILL OF INSULT*, they did not “ stick in his throat.”—What is that Bill of Rights? It can never be too often read. I will make no comment upon it, because your own heads and hearts will make that comment ; you have a posterity to look to. Are desperate ruffians, who are to be found in every country, thus to attack the unalienable rights and privileges which are to descend undiminished to that posterity?

Are YOU not to take care that this shall be sacred to your posterity. Is it not a trust in YOUR hands? It is a trust in your hands as much as the execution of the law is a trust in the hands of the crown ; each has its guardians in this community, but you are the guardians of the Bill of Rights.

Gentlemen, it is this, “ That the pretended power of suspending of laws, or the execution of the laws, by regal authority, without consent of parliament, is illegal.”

“ That the pretended power of dispensing with laws, or the execution of laws, by the regal authority, as it hath been assumed and exercised of late, is illegal.”

That is, the law is above all.

“ That levying money for or to the use of the Crown, by pretence of prerogative, without grant of parliament, for longer time, or in other manner than the same is or shall be granted, is illegal.”

“ That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitions are illegal.”

All that you get by the Bill of Rights, according to this man's doctrine, is, that the Commons of this country have the right of petitioning. We all know this alludes to the case of the seven bishops ; that was a gross violation of the rights of those subjects of this country ; therefore, he states, falsely and maliciously, according to the language of the information, which is perfectly correct in the present case, that the whole that was obtained by the subjects of this country was the right of petitioning ; whereas it is declared to be their unalterable right, and ever to have been so, and adverts, as I before stated, to a gross violation of it in a recent case.

“ That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law.”

“ That the subjects, which are protestants, may have arms for their defence, suitable to their conditions, and as allowed by law.”

“ That elections of members of parliament, ought to be free.

“ That the freedom of speech, and debates or proceedings in parliament, ought not to be impeached, or questioned, in any court or place out of parliament.”

“ That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

“ That jurors ought to be duly impanelled and returned ; and jurors which pass upon men in trials for high treason ought to be freeholders.”

“ That all grants and promises of fines and forfeitures of particular persons, before conviction, are illegal and void.”

“ And that for the redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the laws, parliaments ought to be held frequently.”

Further, gentlemen, this bill goes on to say, “ For the ratifying, confirming, and establishing the said declaration, and the articles, clauses, matters, and things, therein contained, by the force of a law made in due form, by authority of Parliament, do pray it may be declared and enacted, that all and singular the rights and liberties asserted and claimed in the said declaration are the true ancient and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom, and so shall be esteemed, allowed, adjudged, deemed, and taken to be; and that all and every the particulars aforesaid shall be firmly and strictly holden and observed, as they are expressed in the said declaration, and all officers and ministers whatsoever shall serve their majesties and their successors, according to the same in all times to come.”

Such, gentlemen, is the Bill of Wrongs and of Insult. I shall not profane it by saying one word more upon it.

Now, gentlemen, I would ask you, whether what is said by this man be reasoning or discussion; or whether it is nothing else but deception, and that deception consisting of a most abominable and complete suppression? Is there a word of this act quoted? Has the poor mechanic, to whom this passage is addressed, who is told that he has been wronged and insulted at the revolution, has he this statute by him to read? Would it not have been fair, at least, to have stated what it was? But instead of that, unsight, unseen, (to use a very vulgar expression) this proposition is tendered to the very lowest man in this country, namely, that the Bill of Rights is a Bill of Wrongs and of Insult.

Pass we then on to another; if you will please to make a memorandum of page 209, you will find that in the same spirit, and with the same design, this man tells you that “ The intention of the government of England,” here comes in another contemptuous expression (“ for I rather chuse to call it by this name than the English government), appears since its political connexion with Germany to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes.”

The government of the country then does not exist for the purpose of preserving our lives and properties; but the government, I mean the Constitution of the country, Kings, Lords, and Commons, exists for no other purpose but to be the instruments of raising taxes. To enter into any discussion of that, is taking up your time unnecessarily—I only beg to draw your attention to the dogmatical and cavalier manner in which these things are asserted; further, he says—“ Domestic concerns are neglected, and with respect to regular law, there is scarcely such a thing.”

I stand in the city of London; I am addressing myself to gentlemen eminent in that city, whether the legislature, since the revolution, has, or not, adverted to domestic concerns: I think I may appeal to the growing prosperity of this country, from the moment that the night mare has been taken off its stomach, which pressed upon it up to that moment.

We then proceed to page 211 and 212, where, after the whole Constitution of this country has been thus treated in gross, he proceeds a little to dissect and consider the component parts of that Constitution; and in page 211 and 212, in a dogma, we have this:

“ With respect to the two Houses of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The Minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it, as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.”

Now, gentlemen, here is another dogma without a single fact, without a single argument; but it is held out to the subjects of this country, that there is no energy or activity in either the aristocratical or democratical parts of this Constitution, but that they are asleep, and you might just as well have statues there; it is not merely said that it is so now, but it is in the nature of things, says he, that it should be so.

“ But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two Houses, the difference
 “ will appear so great as to shew the inconsistency of placing power where
 “ there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it.—Wretched as the state
 “ of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called
 “ the House of Lords, and so little is this nickname, House, regarded, that
 “ the people scarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to
 “ be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest
 “ of the nation.”

Now, gentlemen, this is again speaking in this man's contemptuous manner, at the expence of the aristocratical part of our constitution of government; an essentially beneficial part, whose great and permanent interest in the country renders them a firm barrier against any encroachment. I am not to suppose that you are so ignorant of the history of your country, as not to know the great and brilliant characters that have sat in that House. No particular period of time is alluded to in this passage. He surely cannot mean the present time; but I conceive he speaks of all times, and that from the very nature of our government it must everlastingly be so. Slander upon that very great and illustrious part of the legislature (untrue at any period), written in this scurrilous and contemptuous manner, is distinguished greatly indeed from any sober discussion of, whether an aristocratical part of government is a good or bad thing, and is calculated only to mislead and inflame.

If you look next to page 232, there you will find that two of the component parts of the legislature, having been thus disposed of, we come up to the throne itself, and this man says very truly of himself:

“ Having thus GLANCED at some of the defects of the two Houses of Parliament, I proceed to *what is called the Crown*, upon which I shall be very
 “ concise :

“ It signifies a nominal office of a million a year, the business of which consists in receiving the money; whether the person be wise or foolish, sane
 “ or insane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every minister acts
 “ upon the same idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people must be
 “ hoodwinked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other;
 “ and what is called the Crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers
 “ all the purposes to be expected from it.—This is more than can be said of
 “ the other two branches.

“ The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, including this
 “ among the rest, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but
 “ from what may happen to the nation, the danger of its coming to its senses.”

Then, gentlemen, we have been insane for these seven or eight hundred years: and I shall just dismiss this with this observation, that this insanity having subsisted so long, I trust in God that it is incurable.

In page 236 you have this note,—“ I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of
 “ William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking
 “ to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power
 “ themselves; yet as the nation was disposed to think something of that event,
 “ I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had
 “ undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged six
 “ hundred thousand pounds for the expence of a little fleet that brought him
 “ from Holland.—George the First acted the same close-fisted part as William

“ had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremin with the money he got from
 “ England, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds over and above his pay
 “ as King; and having thus purchased it at the expence of England, added it
 “ to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit.—In fact, every na-
 “ tion that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been
 “ the prey of jobs ever since the Revolution.”

Then, gentlemen, what he calls a nation governing itself, is something extremely different from a nation having consented from time immemorial to be governed by a democracy, an aristocracy, and an hereditary executive supreme magistrate; and moreover, by a law-paramount, which all are bound to obey, he conceives, I say, that sort of government not to be a government of the people themselves, but he denominates that sort of government a job, and not a government.

Gentlemen, such are the passages which I have selected to you, as those that disclose the most offensive doctrines in the book; that is such as go fundamentally to the overturning the government of this country.—I beg pardon, I have omitted one which contains more of direct invitation than any thing I have yet stated.—It is in page 255: it is said, the fraud, hypocrisy and imposition of governments are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any long career.—The farce of monarchy and aristocracy in all countries is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral—let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted. The time is not very distant when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick, for men, at the expence of a million a year, who understand neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a Parish Constable.”

This is said of William the Third—this is said of two very illustrious Princes of the House of Brunswick, George the First and Second, and extends to the present Sovereign upon the throne.

“ If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple
 “ thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every
 “ town and village in England.”

The policy of the constitution of this country has ever avoided, excepting when driven to it by melancholy necessity, to disturb the hereditary succession to the throne; and it has wisely thought it more fitting to pursue that system, even though a foreigner should be seated on the throne of these realms, than to break through it.—This would insinuate, that the necessary defects of an hereditary monarchy are such as outweigh the advantages attending that which I have stated. Is that so? I would ask any man who hears me, in point of history, whether it is not the permanent defect of elective monarchies or sovereigns, that they seldom are men of any consideration, and for an obvious reason; most frequently it has happened that turbulent factions, after having desolated their country, one of them (it has so happened, at least in most instances as far as my recollection goes) sets up a tool whom the successful faction can themselves govern at pleasure.—Often has it happened that such factions, when a civil war arises, which must almost necessarily be the case in elective monarchies, not choosing to come to the conclusion of an armed contest, have chosen a very weak person, each in hope of strengthening his party by the time the periodical civil war should come round. I believe, upon examination, this will be found to be generally the case, and to have prevailed in elective monarchies to a greater degree than any inconveniencies that may have ever arisen from the natural infirmities of princes who succeeded to their thrones by hereditary rights, in the constitution of Great Britain; for to that, this man alludes.

Has he stated with any sort of fairness, or has he at all stated or adverted to the many, many remedies we have for any defect of that sort? Has he stated the numerous councils of a King? His council of Parliament—his council of his Judges in matters of law—his Privy council? Has he stated the responsibility of all those councils? Some in point of character, some of personable responsibility? Has he stated the responsibility of those immediate servants who conduct his executive government? Has he stated the appointment of regents? Has he stated all this, which is indispensably necessary towards a fair and honest discussion (which this book will possibly be called) of this point of his insuperable objection to hereditary monarchy? Can this be called any other than gross suppression and wilful mis-statement, to raise discontent in half-informed minds?

There does come across my mind at this moment, unquestionably, one illustrious exception to that doctrine I have stated, of men not the most capable of government having in general been chosen in the case of elective monarchies; and that is a man whom no indignities, no misfortunes, no disappointments, no civil commotions, no provocations, ever forced from the full and steady possession of a strong mind, which has always risen with elasticity under all the pressures that I have stated; and he, though not in one sense of that word a great *Prince*, yet is certainly a great *Man*, who will go down as such to the latest posterity: I mean the King of Poland. Don't imagine, gentlemen, that my adverting to this illustrious character is useless. Every gentleman who hears knows he had a considerable part of his matured education in this country. Here he familiarized himself with the constitution of this country. Here he became informed of the provisions of what this man calls the Bill of Wrongs and Insults, without disparagement to him, for I believe him to be a just and wise prince, of great natural faculties, here it was that he saw, and could alone learn how the regal government of a free people was conducted, and that under a prince of the house of Brunswick.

Gentlemen, having stated thus much to you, I will now, for want of suitable expressions, (for mine are very feeble) borrow from another; I certainly have formed an opinion upon this subject precisely similar; to deliver it in plain words would exhaust the utmost of my powers, but I will borrow the words of a very able writer, who has most properly, for fear some ill impression should be made by this book on the weaker part of mankind in America, given an answer to this book of Mr. Paine. That distinguished gentleman, I have reason to believe, though not the chief magistrate in that country, is the second in the executive government of it; that is, he is second in the exercise of the regal part of the government of that country. He takes care to confute accurately what Mr. Paine says with respect to America; but borrowing his *words*, I beg to be understood, that this is my *opinion* of the work before you, and which I humbly offer for your consideration and adoption.—He says, “his intention appears evidently to be, to convince the people of Great Britain, that they have neither liberty nor a constitution; that their only possible means to produce those blessings to themselves, is to topple down headlong their present government, and follow implicitly the example of the French.”

Gentlemen, the next passage, which I beg to be understood as mine, I wish I could express it as well myself, is this:—“Mr. Paine, in reply, cuts the Gordian knot at once, declares the parliament of 1688 to have been downright usurpers, censures them for having unwisely sent to Holland for a King, denies the existence of a British constitution, and invites the people of England to overturn their present government and to erect another upon the broad basis of national sovereignty and government by representation. As Mr. Paine has departed altogether from the principles of the revolution, and has torn up by the roots all reasoning from the British Constitution, by

“ the denial of its existence, it becomes necessary to examine his work upon
 “ the grounds which he has chosen to assume. If we judge of the produc-
 “ tion from its apparent tendency, we may call it an address to the English
 “ nation, attempting to prove that they have a right to form a new Consti-
 “ tution ; that it is expedient for them immediately to exercise that right,
 “ and that in the formation of this Constitution they can do no better than
 “ to imitate the model set before them by the French national assembly.
 “ However immethodical his production is, I believe the whole of its argu-
 “ mentative part may be referred to these three points : If the subject were
 “ to affect only the British nation, we might leave them to reason and act
 “ for themselves ; but these are concerns equally important to all mankind ;
 “ and the citizens of America are called upon, from high authority, (he al-
 “ ludes to a gentleman in a high situation in that country, who has published
 “ an opinion of this book) to rally round the standard of this champion of
 “ revolutions. I shall, therefore now proceed to examine the reasons ;” and
 so he goes on.

Gentlemen, I would adopt, with your permission, a few more words from
 this publication :—“ When Mr. Paine invited the people of England to de-
 “ stroy their present government, and form another constitution, he should
 “ have given them sober reasoning, and not flippant witticisms.”—Whether
 that is or not the case what I have read to you to-day will enable you to
 judge. “ He should have explained to them the nature of the grievances by
 “ which they are oppressed, and demonstrated the impossibility of reforming
 “ the government in its present organization. He should have pointed out
 “ some possible method for them to act, in their original character, without
 “ a total dissolution of civil society among them ; he should have proved what
 “ great advantages they would reap as a nation from such a revolution, with-
 “ out disguising the great dangers and formidable difficulties with which
 “ it must be attended.” So much for the passages themselves, and this in-
 terpretation, which I humbly submit to your consideration.

The next matter upon which I shall proceed is the evidence which I pro-
 pose to adduce, and that evidence will go to shew, not only the fact of this
 man's being the writer of this book, by his own repeated admission, and by
 letters under his own hand, but will likewise go directly to shew what is his
 intent in such publication, which appears I think most clearly ; and over and
 above that I shall produce to you a Letter, which this man was pleased to ad-
 dress to myself, in which Letter he avows himself in so many words the au-
 thor, and I shall prove it to be his hand-writing ; and further than that,
 there is matter in that letter, apparently shewing the intention with which
 that book was written, namely, to vilify this constitution, and to injure this
 country irretrievably.

Two other letters I shall be under the necessity of reading to you, in which
 he has stated himself the author. The one is a letter to a person of the name
 of Jordan, in which he expresses himself in this manner :

“ February 16, 1792,” (that was the day on which the book was published)
 “ For your satisfaction and my own I send you the inclosed, though I do not
 “ apprehend there will be any occasion to use it : if in case there should, you
 “ will immediately send a line for me, under cover, to Mr. Johnson, St.
 “ Paul's Church Yard, who will forward it to me, upon which I shall come
 “ and answer personally for the work ; send also for Mr. Horne Tooke.

“ T. P.”

The letter inclosed was this ; addressed to the same man, Jordan, the Book-
 seller.—“ Sir, should any person, under the sanction of any kind of autho-
 “ rity, enquire of you respecting the author and publisher of the Rights of
 “ Man, you will please to mention me as the author and publisher.”

" work, and shew to such person this letter. I will, as soon as I am acquainted with it, appear and answer for the work personally."

Gentlemen, with respect to his letter written to me, it is in these terms.

Mr. ERSKINE. My Lord, the Attorney General states a letter in the handwriting of Mr. Paine, which establishes that he is the author. I desire to know whether he means to read a letter which may be the subject of a substantive and distinct prosecution; I do not mean to dispute the publication, or even to give him the trouble of proving the letters which he has just stated; whether the Attorney General will think it consistent with the situation in which he is placed, at this moment, to read a letter written at a time long subsequent to the publication, containing, as I understand (if I am mistaken in that I withdraw my objection) but containing distinct clear and unequivocal libellous matter, and which I, in my address to the Jury, if I am not deceived in what I have heard, shall admit to be upon every principle of the English Law a libel. Therefore, if that should turn out to be the case, will your lordship suffer the mind of the jury to be entirely put aside from that matter which is the subject of the prosecution; and to go into matter which hereafter may be, and I cannot but suppose would be, if the defendant were within the reach of the law of this country, the subject of a distinct and independent prosecution.

LORD KENYON. If that letter goes a jot to prove that he is the author of this publication, I cannot reject that evidence; in prosecutions for high treason, where overt acts are laid, you may prove overt acts not laid to prove those that are laid; if it goes to prove him the author of the book, I am bound to admit it.

" Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL,

The Letter is thus:

Paris, 11th of November, 1st Year of the Republic.

" Sir, as there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this letter to you, as to a man against whom I have no animosity.

" You have, as Attorney General, commenced a prosecution against me as the author of the Rights of Man. Had not my duty, in consequence of my being elected a member of the National Convention of France, called me from England, I should have staid to have contested the injustice of that prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prosecution, but to defend the principles I had advanced in the work.

" The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution; when I have leisure, I shall have no objection to meet you on that ground; but, as I now stand, whether you go on with the prosecution or whether you do not, or whether you obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me as an individual. If you obtain one (which you are welcome to if you can get it), it cannot affect me, either in person, property, or reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter; and with respect to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the Man in the Moon, as against me; neither do I see how you can continue the prosecution against me as you would have done against one of *your own people*, who had absented himself because he was prosecuted; what passed at Dover, proves that my departure from England was no secret.

" My necessary absence from your country affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine or against the Rights of the People of England to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will shew that something else was the object, and that something else can be no other than the People of England; for it is against *their Rights*, and not against me, that a verdict

“ or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all. Be then so candid as to
 “ tell the Jury (if you chuse to continue the process) whom it is you are pro-
 “ secuting, and on whom it is that the verdict is to fall.”

Gentlemen, I certainly will comply with this request, I am prosecuting both him and his work; and if I succeed in this prosecution, he shall never return to this country otherwise than *in vinculis*, for I will outlaw him.

“ But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you
 “ this letter; and however you may chuse to interpret them, they proceed
 “ from a good heart. The time, Sir, is becoming too serious to play with
 “ Court prosecutions, and sport with national rights. The terrible examples
 “ that have taken place here upon men, who less than a year ago, thought
 “ themselves as secure as any prosecuting Judge, Jury, or Attorney General,
 “ can now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your
 “ situation.”

Now Gentlemen, I do not think that Mr. Paine judges very well of mankind—I do not think that it is a fair conclusion of Mr. Paine, that men such as you and myself, who are quietly living in obedience to the laws of the land which they inhabit, exercising their several functions peaceably, and I hope with a moderate share of reputation: I do not conceive that men called upon to think, and in the habit of reflection, are the most likely men to be immediately thrown off the hinges by menaces and threats; and I doubt whether men exercising public functions, as you and I do in the face of our country, could have the courage to run away. All I can tell Mr. Paine is this—if any of his assassins are here in London, and there is some ground to suppose they may be, or the assassins of those with whom he is connected; if they are here, I tell them, that I do in my conscience think, that for a man to die of doing his duty, is just as good a thing as dying of a raging fever, or under the tortures of the stone. Let him not think, that not to be an incendiary is to be a coward.

He says—“ That the Government of England is as great, if not the greatest
 “ perfection of fraud and corruption, that ever took place since governments
 “ began, is what you cannot be a stranger to; unless the constant habit of
 “ seeing it has blinded your sense.” Upon my word, gentlemen, I am stone blind, I am not sorry for it.—“ But though you may not chuse to see it,
 “ the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may
 “ chuse to believe. Is it possible that you or I can believe, or that reason
 “ can make any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr.
 “ Guelph, or any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the government of a
 “ nation.”

Now, gentlemen, with respect to this passage, I have this to say, it is contemptuous, scandalous, false, cruel;—Why, Gentlemen, is Mr. Paine, in addition to the political doctrines that he is teaching us in this country; Is he to teach us the morality and religion, of **IMPLACABILITY**? Is he to teach human creatures, whose moments of existence depend upon the permission of a Being, merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness, that those youthful errors from which even royalty is not exempted are to be treasured up in a vindictive memory, and are to receive sentence of irremissible sin at **HIS** hands. Are they all to be confounded in these slanderous terms, shocking for British ears to hear, and I am sure distressing to their hearts? He is a barbarian, who could use such profligate expressions uncalled for by any thing which could be the object of his letter addressed to me. If giving me pain was his object, he has that hellish gratification. Would this man destroy that great auxiliary of all human laws and constitutions—“ to judge of others as we would be judged ourselves.”—This is the bill of wrongs and insults of the christian religion. I presume it is considered as that bill of wrongs and insults in the heart of that man who can have the barbarity to use those expressions and address them to me in a way by which I could not but receive them.

Gentlemen, there is not perhaps in the world a more beneficial analogy, nor a finer rule to judge by in public matters, than by assimilating them to what passes in domestic life.—A family is a small kingdom, a kingdom is a large family: suppose this to have happened in private life, judge of the good heart of this man, who thrusts into my hands, the grateful servant of a kind and beneficent master, and that too through the unavoidable trick of the common post slander upon his whole offspring. Lay your hands upon your hearts, and tell me what is *your* verdict with respect to his heart—I *see* it!

Gentlemen, he has the audacity to say, “I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another.” Does he speak to me of those August Personages as one man ought to speak to another? Had he spoken those words to me personally, I will not answer for it, whether I should not have forgot the duties of my office, and the dignity of my station, by being hurried into a violation of that peace, the breach of which I am compelled to punish in others. He says, “And I know also, that I speak, what other people are beginning to think. “That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do it will signify nothing) “without *packing a Jury*, and that we *both* know that such tricks are practiced, is what I have very good reason to believe.”——*Mentiris impudentissime*.—Gentlemen, I know of no such practice; I know, indeed, that no such practice exists, nor can exist; I know the very contrary of this to be true; and I know too that this Letter, containing this dangerous falsehood, was destined for future publication; that I have no doubt of, and therefore I dwell thus long upon it.

“I have gone into coffee-houses, and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opinion.” Whether the sense of this *nation* is to be had in some pot-houses and coffee-houses in this town of his own choosing, is a matter I leave to your judgment. “And I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the book; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving it; and this I think is a *fair way of collecting the natural currency of opinion*. Do not then, Sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a situation that may be *injurious* to them afterwards;” injurious to them afterwards, those words speak for themselves. He proceeds thus.

“I do not speak this from policy,” (what then?) “but from” (gentlemen, I will give you a hundred guesses) “BENEVOLENCE! but if you chuse to go on with the process, I make it my request that you would read this letter in Court, after which the Judge and the Jury may do as they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue one way or the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it.—THOMAS PAINE.”

So it is a subscription defence you hear.

“P. S. I intended, had I staid in England, to have published the information, with my remarks upon it,”—that would have been a decent thing—“before the trial came on; but as I am otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over, when I shall reply fully to every thing you shall advance;” I hope in God he will not omit any one single word that I have uttered this day, or shall utter in my future address to you. This *conceited menace* I despise, as I do those of a nature more *cut-throat*.

Gentlemen, I do not think that I need to trouble you any further for the present: according as you shall be of opinion, that the necessarily mischievous tendency and intent of this book is that which I have taken the liberty (at more length than I am warranted perhaps) to state to you; according as you shall or shall not be of opinion, so necessarily will be your verdict. I have done my duty in bringing before a jury an offender of this magnitude. Be the

event what it may, I *have* done my duty; I am satisfied with having placed this great and flourishing community under the powerful shield of your protection.

EVIDENCE FOR THE CROWN.

Thomas Haynes sworn. [Examined by *Mr. Bearcroft*.]

Q. Where did you get that book? A. At Mr. Jordan's, in Fleet-street.

Q. When? A. In the month of February, 1792.

(*It was put into Court.*)

Thomas Chapman sworn. [Examined by *Mr. Solicitor General*.]

Q. What business are you? A. A Printer.

Q. Do you know the defendant, Thomas Paine? A. I do.

Q. Upon what occasion did you become acquainted with him? A. On the recommendation of Mr. Thomas Christie.

Q. For what purpose was he introduced to you, or you to him? A. I was introduced to Mr. Paine, by Mr. Christie, to print some book that he had.

Q. When was that? A. I cannot directly say; it was in the year 1791.

Q. What book was that? A. The First Part of the Rights of Man.

Q. Are you a publisher as well as a Printer? A. I am not; merely a printer.

Q. Did you print the First Part of the Rights of Man? A. I did.

Q. Who was the selling book-seller of that book? A. Mr. Jordan, of Fleet-street.

Q. Had you any intercourse with Mr. Jordan and Mr. Paine concerning that book? A. I had.

Q. What was that intercourse relative to? A. To the manner of publishing the book.

Q. Did Jordan in fact publish that book? A. He did.

Q. Had you any intercourse with Mr. Paine relative to the printing this book which I have in my hand. (*The Witness looks at it.*) A. The first edition of this book I had; I don't think I printed this edition of it. I printed the first edition of it.

Q. Is that the First or Second Part? A. The second part. I printed a part of the Second Part.

Mr. Erskine. Can you swear to that very book? A. I cannot.

Mr. Solicitor General. You say you printed part of the Second Part of the Rights of Man? A. Yes.

Q. What part did you print? A. I printed as far as page 112, signature H.

Q. By signature H, you mean the letter H, that is at the bottom of the page? A. Yes.

Q. Upon whose employment did you print so much of the Second Part? A. Mr. Paine's.

Q. Did you print the rest of the work from letter to H the conclusion of it? A. I have the copy in my possession as far as 146, I think: the manuscript copy.

Q. Did you print as far as 146, or stop at 112, signature H? A. I stopped at 112; but my people had composed to page 146, which was not printed by me.

Q. Had you any conversation with Mr. Paine relative to the printing the remainder of the work, and if you had, what was that conversation? A. When I had finished page 112, or sheet H, the proof sheet I, came into my hand; upon examining sheet I, there was a part, which, in my weak judgment, appeared of a dangerous tendency; I therefore immediately concluded in my mind not to proceed any farther in the work; accordingly I wrote a short note to Mr. Paine; this was about two o'clock in the afternoon, determining to send a letter, with the remainder of the copy. I felt a degree of reluctance from the circumstance of Mr. Paine's civilities that I had experienced as

a gentleman and an employer; and I was fearful I should not have courage in the morning to deliver up the copy; but a circumstance occurred in the course of the day, which enabled me to do it with satisfaction to myself. I will relate the circumstance, if you will give me leave.

Q. Was Mr. Paine present when that circumstance happened? *A.* He was: and as it may, in the eyes of the Court, exculpate me from a charge that Mr. Paine has thought proper to bring against me, I shall esteem it a favour of the Court if they will suffer me to mention every circumstance of that kind.—That very day at six o'clock Mr. Paine called upon me.

Q. Do you recollect the day? *A.* I have a copy of that letter, which is dated the 17th of January, so that he must have had called upon me on the 16th. Mr. Paine called upon me, and, as was rather unusual, at least to my knowledge, he was rather intoxicated by liquor. He had, I believe, that day, dined with Mr. Johnson, in Saint Paul's Church Yard. Being intoxicated he introduced a subject we have unfortunately differed on several times; the subject of religion, a favourite subject with him when intoxicated. I am sorry to mention these circumstances; but as it will justify me in the eyes of the public, as part of the Appendix has done me material injury in my profession. The subject of debate ran very high; he opposed every thing with great virulence, till at length he came to personal abuse, very much so, both to myself and Mrs. Chapman. An observation was made by Mrs. Chapman, late in the evening, I believe near ten o'clock, at which Mr. Paine was particularly offended; rising up in a great passion, he said he had not been so personally affronted in the whole course of his life before.

Mr. Erskine. The information charges no offence like this.

Court. This is no offence, it appears only at present to be impertinent.

Mr. Erskine. I admit the publication, but I cannot admit that letter.

Mr. Solicitor General. Go on.

Chapman. Mr. Paine accordingly rose in a great passion, declaring that, as I was a dissenter, he had a very bad opinion of dissenters in general; he believed them all to be a pack of hypocrites, and therefore he must deal very cautiously with them, and begged, therefore, that in the morning, before I proceeded any further in his work, we should have a settlement. I felt a degree of pleasure in it, as it enabled me, with courage, next morning, to deliver up his copy, which I had before determined. I sent a letter next morning, inclosing the whole of his copy. He called upon me, and made many apologies for what he had said: he said that it was the effect of liquor, and hoped that I would pass it over, and proceed with the work; but being determined on the matter, I would not upon any account.

Q. And did you state to him the reason why you would not go on with the work? *A.* I did. The letter will shew the reason.

Mr. Solicitor General. You have told us that Mr. Paine was your employer, so far as you did print. Did you ever make any offers to any body to buy the copy of the Second Part of the Rights of Man? *A.* I did.

Q. To whom? *A.* To Mr. Paine.

Q. When you made these offers, did he accept them or refuse them, or how did he treat the offers? *A.* I made him three separate offers in the different stages of the work: the first, I believe, was a hundred guineas, the second five hundred, and the last was a thousand.

Q. To these offers, what did Mr. Paine answer? *A.* To the best of my recollection, he answered, that as it was his intention to publish a small edition of his work, he wished to reserve it in his own hands.

Q. Have you seen this Mr. Paine write? *A.* I have.

Q. Do you think you know his hand writing? *A.* I think I do.

Q. Look at that letter, (dated Feb. 16, 1792,) is that his hand writing? *A.* I think it is.

Q. Look at that (dated Feb. 16, 1792,) enclosed in the above? A. I think that is his hand writing.

Q. Look particularly at this short note, (dated April 21, 1792,) is that his hand writing? A. I believe it is.

Q. Here is an order directed to yourself, (dated Feb. 7. 1792,) look at that, is that his hand writing? A. It is.

Q. Look at that letter (dated June 29, 1792,) is that Mr. Paine's hand writing? A. I believe it is.

Q. Look at that letter (the letter to the Attorney General, dated Paris, the 11th of Nov.) is that Mr. Paine's hand writing? A. I cannot speak with any certainty.

Q. Do you believe that to be his hand writing? A. I am inclined to think it is.

Thomas Chapman, cross-examined by Mr. Erskine.

Q. In the first place, how often have you seen Mr. Paine write? A. I presume a dozen times.

Q. Did you ever look at him when he was writing, so as particularly to observe how he formed his characters? A. Decency would not suffer me to look particularly.

Q. I take for granted, that you did not at that time suppose you should be called upon to prove his hand writing, and did not of course take any notice of it.—Did you, upon your oath, look at it with a view of saying, I will see how this man writes in order that I may know his writing again? A. I did not.

Q. Did you ever see any other writing than that you have described? A. No.

Q. Then you are only inclined to believe that last letter is his hand writing? A. Yes.

Mr. Solicitor General. Do you believe that the last letter is his hand writing? A. I think it is.

Mr. Erskine. Do you mean to say, that you have a firmer belief of it now than you had a moment ago? A. Yes.

Q. What has produced this change in your opinion? A. By the manner of his signature.

Q. Had not you looked at his signature before? A. It struck me that there was something particular in the manner of his writing his signature.

Q. Then you have a firmer belief now than you had a few minutes ago? A. Yes.

The Letters read.

"Feb 7th, 92.

" Mr. Chapman, please to deliver to Mr. Jordan the remaining sheets of
" the Rights of Man. " THOMAS PAINE."

"Feb. 16, 1792.

" For your satisfaction and my own, I send you the enclosed, tho' I do not
" apprehend there will be any occasion to use it; if in case there should, you
" will immediately send a line for me under cover, to Mr. Johnson, St. Paul's
" Church-Yard, who will forward it to me, upon which I shall come and an-
" swer personally for the work.—Send also to Mr. Horne Tooke.

" Mr. Jordan, " T. P."

" No. 166, Fleet-street.

" S I R,

"Feb. 16, 1792.

" Should any person, under the sanction of any kind of authority, enquire
" of you respecting the author and publisher of the Rights of Man, you will
" please to mention me as the author and publisher of that work, and shew to
" such person this letter. I will, as soon as I am made acquainted with it,
" appear and answer for the work personally.

" Mr. Jordan, " Your humble Servant,

" No. 166, Fleet-street.

" THOMAS PAINE."

" Mr. JORDAN, April 21, 1792.
 " Please to settle the account of the sale of the pamphlets with Mr. John-
 " son, as I am at present engaged in getting forward another small work for
 " publication.

" Mr. Jordan,
 " No. 166, Fleet-street.

" Your's, &c.
 " THOMAS PAINE."

" S I R, London, June 29, 1792.
 " I have drawn on you two drafts for one hundred and fifty pounds each,
 " one at seven days sight, the other at fourteen, payable to Mr. Johnson, or
 " order, for monies which he has advanced on my account, and bills which are
 " due, which drafts please to pay, and place the same to my account.

" Mr. Jordan,
 " No. 166, Fleet-street.

" Yours, &c.
 " THOMAS PAINE."

" S I R, Paris, 11th of November, 1st year of the Republic.
 " As there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this
 " letter to you, as to a man against whom I have no animosity.
 " You have, as Attorney General, commenced a prosecution against me,
 " as the Author of Rights of Man. Had not my duty, in consequence of my
 " being elected a Member of the National Convention of France, called me
 " from England, I should have staid to have contested the injustice of that
 " prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prose-
 " cution, but to have defended the principles I had advanced in the work.
 " The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me
 " to trouble myself about your prosecution: when I have leisure, I have no
 " objection to meet you on that ground; but as I now stand, whether you
 " go on with the prosecution, or whether you do not, or whether you
 " obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indiffer-
 " ence to me as an individual. If you obtain one (which you are welcome
 " to, if you can get it) it cannot affect me either in person, property, or
 " reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter: and with respect
 " to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the
 " Man in the Moon as against me: neither do I see how you can continue
 " the prosecution against me as you would have done against one of *your own*
 " *people* who had absented himself because he was prosecuted: what passed at
 " Dover proves that my departure from England was no secret.

" My necessary absence from your country now, in consequence of my duty
 " here, affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was in-
 " tended against Thomas Paine, or against the Rights of the people of Eng-
 " land to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot
 " now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will
 " shew that something else was the object, and that something else can be
 " no other than the people of England, for it is against *their rights*, and not
 " against me, that a verdict or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all.
 " Be then so candid as to tell the jury (if you chuse to continue the process)
 " whom it is you are prosecuting, and on whom it is that the verdict
 " is to fall.

" But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this
 " letter; and, however you may chuse to interpret them, they proceed from
 " a good heart. The time, Sir, is becoming too serious to play with Court
 " prosecutions, and sport with National Rights. The terrible examples that
 " have taken place here, upon men who less than a year ago thought them-
 " selves as secure as any prosecuting Judge, Jury, or Attorney General, can
 " now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation.
 " That the government of England is as great, if not the greatest, perfection
 " of fraud and corruption that ever took place since governments began, is
 " what you cannot be a stranger to, unless the constant habit of seeing it has

“ blinded your senses ; but though you may not chuse to see it, the people
 “ are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may chuse to
 “ believe. Is it possible that you, or I can believe, or that reason can make
 “ any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph, or
 “ any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the government of a nation ? I
 “ speak to you as one man ought to speak to another ; and I know also, that
 “ I speak what other people are beginning to think.

“ That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do it will signify nothing)
 “ without packing a jury, (and we both know that such tricks are practised)
 “ is what I have very good reason to believe. I have gone into coffee-houses,
 “ and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opi-
 “ nion, and I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the
 “ book ; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving
 “ it, and this I think is a fair way of collecting the natural currency of opi-
 “ nion. Do not then, Sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a
 “ situation that may be injurious to them afterwards. I do not speak this
 “ from policy, but from benevolence ; but if you chuse to go on with the
 “ process, I make it my request to you that you will read this letter in
 “ Court, after which the Judge and the Jury may do as they please. As I
 “ do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be af-
 “ fected by the issue, one way or the other, I shall though a foreigner in your
 “ country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting
 “ the right of the Nation against the prosecution ; and it is for this purpose
 “ only that I shall do it. THOMAS PAINE.”

“ To Arch. Macdonald, Attorney General.

“ As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections.

“ P. S. I intended, had I staid in England, to have published the infor-
 “ mation, with my remarks upon it, before the trial came on ; but, as I am
 “ otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over, when I shall reply
 “ fully to every thing you shall advance. T. P.”

Andrew Milne sworn. [Examined by Mr. Bearcroft.]

Q. I believe you lived with Mr. Jordan ? A. Yes.

Q. When ? A. About this time twelvemonth.

Q. Did you at any time see Mr. Paine at Mr. Jordan's ? A. Yes.

Q. What was the business he came upon ? A. It was respecting money principally.

Q. Did you ever go to the printers of that book while it was in hand ?

A. The Second Part I did.

Q. Did you go by the directions of any-body, and by whose directions ?

A. By Mr. Paine's directions.

Q. Had you occasion to see him more than once ? A. Yes.

Q. Did you at any time get an order from him to Mr. Crowder the printer ?

A. Yes, once in particular.

Q. Was that before or after it was gone out of the hands of Chapman ?

A. After.

Q. Did you ever see him at Jordan's shop, after it had been published more than once ? A. Yes.

Q. Tell us the circumstances. A. Respecting that note, in which he mentions Mr. Horne Tooke, I was in the shop at the time Mr. Paine came with Mr. Horne Tooke to Mr. Jordan's, in the evening ; the conversation was in the parlour ; I did not hear the conversation, but I knew of it afterwards.

Q. I don't ask you what you learned from any body else ; did you learn it from Paine ? A. No.

Q. Did you see any money paid by Jordan to Mr. Paine on account of this book ? A. Yes.

John Purdue sworn. [Examined by Mr. Wood.]

Q. Are you acquainted with Mr. Paine? A. I was formerly.

Q. How long ago? A. I have not seen him since he went to America.

Q. He was in the Excise? A. He was in the Excise.

Q. Are you acquainted with his hand writing? A. Formerly I was.

Q. Look at these letters, and say, whether you believe them to be his hand-writing? A. I believe they all are.

(The Extracts from the Libel read, as follows.)

Page 192.

“ All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable Crown,
“ or an heritable Throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be
“ called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable
“ property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they
“ were flocks and herds !”

Page 204.

“ This convention met in Philadelphia in May 1787, of which General
“ Washington was elected president. He was not at that time connected
“ with any of the State-governments, or with Congress. He delivered up his
“ commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.
“ The convention went deeply into all the subjects ; and having, after a
“ variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the se-
“ veral parts of a federal constitution, the next question was, the manner of
“ giving it authority and practice.
“ For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a
“ Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector ; but they referred the whole
“ matter to the sense and interest of the country.”

Page 206.

“ The history of the Edwards and Henries, and up to the commencement
“ of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted
“ within the limits to which the nation had restricted it. The Stuarts en-
“ deavoured to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all those
“ instances we see nothing of a constitution, but only restrictions on assumed
“ power.

“ After this, another William, descended from the same stock, and claim-
“ ing from the same origin, gained possession ; and of the two evils, *James*
“ and *William*, the nation preferred what it thought the least ; since, from
“ circumstances it must take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes
“ here into view. What is it but a bargain, which the parts of the Govern-
“ ment made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges ? You
“ shall have so much, and I will have the rest ; and with respect to the na-
“ tion, it said, for *your share*, *you shall have the right of petitioning*. This
“ being the case, the Bill of Rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and
“ of insult. As to what is called the Convention Parliament, it was a thing
“ that made itself, and then made the authority by which it acted. A
“ few persons got together, and called themselves by that name. Several of
“ them had never been elected, and none of them for the purpose.

“ From the time of William, a species of government arose, issuing out of
“ this coalition Bill of Rights ; and more so, since the corruption introduced
“ at the Hanover succession, by the agency of Walpole, that can be described
“ by no other name than a despotic legislation.—Though the parts may em-
“ barraß each other, the whole has no bounds ; and the only right it ac-
“ knowledges out of itself is the right of petitioning. Where then is the
“ Constitution either that gives or that restrains power ?

“ It is not because a part of the government is elective, that makes it less
“ a despotism, if the persons so elected, possess afterwards, as a parliament,

“ unlimited powers. Election, in this case, becomes separated from representation, and the candidates are candidates for despotism.

Page 209.

“ The intention of the Government of England, (for I rather chuse to call it by this name than the English Government) appears, since its political connexion with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and with respect to regular law there is scarcely such a thing.”

Page 211. Note.

“ With respect to the two Houses, of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The Minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it, as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.”

“ But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two Houses, the difference will appear so great, as to shew the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the House of Lords; and so little is this nicknamed House regarded, that the people scarcely enquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and furthest removed from the general interest of the nation.”

Page 232.

“ Having thus glanced at some of the defects of the two Houses of Parliament, I proceed to what is called the Crown, upon which I shall be very concise.

“ It signifies a nominal office of a million sterling a year, the business of which consists in receiving the money.—Whether the person be wise or foolish, sane or insane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every ministry acts upon the same idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people must be hoodwinked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other; and what is called the Crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers all the purposes to be expected from it. This is more than can be said of the other two branches. The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation—the danger of its coming to its senses.”

Page 236. Note.

“ I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power themselves; yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of that event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged 600,000*l.* for the expence of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the First acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, 250,000*l.* over and above his pay as King; and having thus purchased it at the expence of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the revolution.”

Page 255.

“ The fraud, hypocrisy, and imposition of governments, are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any longer career. The farce of monarchy and aristocracy, in all countries, is following that of

“ chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral. Let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

“ The time is not very distant when England will laugh at herself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick for men, at the expence of a million a year, who understood neither her laws, her language nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of parish constable. If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.”

The end of the Evidence for the Crown.

THE HONORABLE THOMAS ERSKINE.

Gentlemen of the Jury. The Attorney-General, in that part of his address which arose from a letter, supposed to have been written to him from France, exhibited signs of strong sensibility and emotion. I do not, I am sure, charge him with acting a part to seduce you; on the contrary I am persuaded from my own feelings, and from my acquaintance with my friend from our childhood upwards, that he expressed himself as he felt. But, Gentlemen, if he felt those painful embarrassments, think what mine must be: he can only feel for the august Character whom he represents in this place, as a subject for his Sovereign, too far removed by custom, and by law, from the intercourses which generate affections, to produce any other sentiments than those that flow from a relation common to us all. But it will be remembered that I stand in the same relation * towards another Great Person, more deeply implicated by this supposed letter; who, not restrained from the cultivation of personal attachment by those qualifications which must always secure them, has exalted my duty of a subject to a Prince, into a warm and honest affection between man and man. Thus circumstanced I certainly should have been glad to have had an earlier opportunity of knowing correctly the contents of this letter, and whether (which I positively deny) it proceeded from the defendant. Coming thus suddenly upon us, I see but too plainly the impression it has made upon you who are to try the cause, and I feel its weight upon myself, who am to conduct it; but this shall neither detach me from my duty, nor, added to all the other difficulties that thicken around me, enervate me (if I can help it) in the discharge of it.

Gentlemen, if the Attorney General is well founded in the commentaries he has made to you upon this book which he prosecutes; if he is warranted by the law of England, in repressing its circulation through these realms, from the illegal and dangerous matters contained in it: if that suppression be, as he avows it, and as in common sense it must be, the sole object of the prosecution, the public has great reason to lament that this letter should have been at all brought into the service of the cause: it is no part of the charge upon the record; it had no existence for months after the work was composed and published; it was not even written, if written at all, till after he had been at Dover, in a manner insultingly expelled from the country by the influence of government, and had become the subject of another country. It cannot, therefore, by any fair inference, even decypher the mind of the author when he composed his work; still less can it affect the construction of the language in which the work itself is written. The introduction of this letter at all is, therefore, not only a departure from the charge, but a sort of dereliction of the object of the prosecution, which is to condemn the book: for if the condemnation of the author is to be obtained, not by the work itself, but by collateral matter not even existing when it was written, nor known to its various publishers throughout the kingdom, how can a verdict upon such

* Mr. Erskine is Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales.

grounds condemn the work, or criminate other publishers, strangers to the collateral matter on which the conviction may be obtained? I maintain therefore, that, upon every principle of sound policy, as it affects the interest of the crown, and upon every rule of justice, as it affects the author of the *Rights of Man*, the letter should be wholly dismissed from your consideration.

Gentlemen, the Attorney General has thought it necessary to inform you, that a rumour had been spread, and had reached his ears, that he only carried on the prosecution as a public prosecutor, but without the concurrence of his own private judgment; and therefore to add the just weight of his own character to his public duty, and to repel what he thinks a calumny, he tells you that he should have deserved to have been driven from society, if he had not arraigned the work and the author before you.

Here too we stand in situations very different. I have no doubt of the existence of such a rumour, and of its having reached his ears, because he says so; but for the narrow circle in which any rumour, personally implicating my learned friend's character, has extended, I might appeal to the multitudes who surround us, and ask, which of all them, except the few connected in office with the crown, ever heard of its existence. But with regard to myself, every man who hears me at this moment, nay, the whole People of England, have been witnesses to the calumnious clamour that, by every art, has been raised and kept up against me: In every place, where business or pleasure collect the public together, day after day my name and character have been the topics of injurious reflection. And for what—only for not having shrunk from the discharge of a duty which no personal advantage recommended, and which a thousand difficulties repelled. But, gentlemen, I have no complaint to make, either against the printers of these libels, nor even against their authors; the greater part of them, hurried perhaps away by honest prejudices, may have believed they were serving their country by rendering me the object of its suspicion and contempt; and if there have been amongst them others who have mixed in it from personal malice and unkindness, I thank God I can forgive them also.—Little indeed did they know me, who thought that such proceedings would influence my conduct: I will for ever, at all hazards, assert the dignity, independence, and integrity of the ENGLISH BAR; without which, impartial justice, the most valuable part of the English constitution, can have no existence. For, from the moment that any advocate can be permitted to say, that he will or will not stand between the crown, and a subject arraigned in the court where he daily sits to practise, from that moment the liberties of England are at an end. If the advocate refuses to defend, from what he may think of the charge or of the defence, he assumes the character of the judge; nay, he assumes it before the hour of judgment; and, in proportion to his rank and reputation, puts the heavy influence of, perhaps, a mistaken opinion into the scale against the accused, in whose favour the benevolent principle of English law makes all presumptions, and which commands the very Judge to be his counsel.

Gentlemen, it is now my duty to address myself regularly and without digression to the defence. And the first thing which presents itself in the discussion of a judicial subject, and indeed of every other, is to state distinctly, and with precision, what the question is, and (where prejudice and misrepresentation have been exerted), to distinguish it accurately from what it is not. The question then is NOT whether the constitution of our fathers, under which we live—under which I present myself before you, and under which alone you have any jurisdiction to hear me,—be or be not preferable to the constitution of America or France, or any other human constitution. For upon what principle can a court, constituted by the authority of any government, and administering a positive system of law under it, pronounce a decision against the con-

stitution which creates its authority ; or the rule of action which its jurisdiction is to enforce ? The common sense of the most uninformed person must revolt at such an absurd supposition.

I have no difficulty, therefore, in admitting, that if by accident some or all of you were alienated in opinion and affection from the forms and principles of the English government, and were impressed with the value of that unmixed representative constitution which this work recommends and inculcates, you could not, on that account, acquit the defendant. Nay, to speak out plainly, I freely admit, that even if you were avowed enemies to monarchy, and devoted to republicanism, you would be nevertheless bound by your oaths, as a jury sworn to administer English justice, to convict the author of the Rights of Man, if it were brought home to your consciences, that he had exceeded those widely extended bounds which the ancient wisdom and liberal policy of the English constitution have allotted to the range of a free press. I freely concede this, because you have no jurisdiction to judge either the author or the work, by any rule but by the English law, which is the source of your authority. But having made this large concession, it follows, by a consequence so inevitable as to be invulnerable to all argument or artifice, that if, on the other hand, you should be impressed (which I know you to be) not only with a dutiful regard, but with an enthusiasm, for the whole form and substance of your own government ; and though you should think that this work, in its circulation amongst classes of men unequal to political researches, may tend to alienate opinion, still you cannot, upon these grounds, without a similar breach of duty, convict the defendant of a libel, unless he has clearly stepped beyond that extended range of communication which the same ancient wisdom and liberal policy of the British constitution has allotted for the liberty of the press.

Gentlemen, I admit, with the Attorney General, that in every case where a court has to estimate the quality of a writing, the mind and intention of the writer must be taken into the account ; the bona, or mala fides, as lawyers express it, must be examined : for a writing may undoubtedly proceed from a motive, and be directed to a purpose, not to be decyphered by the mere construction of the thing written. But wherever a writing is arraigned as seditious or slanderous, not upon its ordinary construction in language, nor from the necessary consequences of its publication, under any circumstances and at all times, but that the criminality springs from some extrinsic matter, not visible upon the page itself, nor universally operative, but capable only of being connected with it by evidence, so as to demonstrate the effect of the publication, and the design of the publisher ; such a writing, not libellous *PER SE*, cannot be arraigned as the author's work is arraigned upon the record before the court. I maintain, without the hazard of contradiction, that the law of England positively requires, for the security of the subject, that every charge of a libel complicated with extrinsic facts and circumstances, *dehors the writing*, must appear literally upon the record, that the defendant may know what crime he is called upon to answer, and how to stand upon his defence. What crime is that the defendant comes to answer for to-day ? what is the notice that I, who am his counsel, have from this parchment of the crime alleged against him ? I come to defend his having written this book. The record states nothing else : the charge of sedition in the introduction is notoriously paper and pack-thread, and the innuendos cannot enlarge the sense, or natural construction of the text. The record does not state any one extrinsic fact or circumstance, to render the work criminal, at one time more than another ; it states no peculiarity of time, or season, or intention, not proveable from the writing itself which is the naked charge upon record. There is nothing therefore which, upon any principle of English law, gives you any jurisdiction beyond the construction of the *work itself* ; and you cannot be justified in finding it criminal

because published at this time, unless it would have been a criminal publication under any circumstances, or at any other time.

The law of England then, both in its forms and substance, being the only rule by which the author or the work can be justified or condemned, and the charge upon the record being the naked charge of a libel, the cause resolves itself into a question of the deepest importance to us all, THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE LIBERTY OF THE ENGLISH PRESS.

But before I enter upon it, I wish to fulfil a duty to the defendant, which, if do not deceive myself, is at this moment peculiarly necessary to his impartial trial.—If an advocate entertains sentiments injurious to the defence he is engaged in, he is not only justified, but bound in duty, to conceal them; so, on the other hand, if his own genuine sentiments, or any thing connected with his character or situation, can add strength to his professional assistance, he is bound to throw them into the scale: in addressing myself, therefore, to gentlemen not only zealous for the honour of English government, but visibly indignant at any attack upon its principles, and who would, perhaps be impatient of arguments from a suspected quarter, I give my client the benefit of declaring, that I am, and ever have been, attached to the genuine principles of the British government; and that, however the court or you may reject the application, I defend him upon principles not only consistent with its permanence and security, but, without the establishment of which, it never could have had an existence.

The proposition which I mean to maintain as the basis of the liberty of the press, and without which it is an empty sound, is this:

That every man, not intending to mislead and to confound, but seeking to enlighten others with what his own reason and conscience, however erroneously, dictate to him as truth, may address himself to the universal reason of a whole nation, either upon the subject of governments in general, or upon that of our own particular country: that he may analyse the principles of its constitution, point out its errors and defects, examine and publish its corruptions, warn his fellow-citizens against their ruinous consequences, and exert his whole faculties in pointing out the most advantageous changes in establishments which he considers to be radically defective, or sliding from their object by abuse.—All this every subject of this country has a right to do, if he contemplates only what he thinks its happiness, and but seeks to change the public mind by the conviction which flows from reasonings dictated by conscience.

If, indeed, he writes what he does not think; if contemplating the misery of others, he wickedly condemns what his own understanding approves; or, even admitting his real disgust against the government or its corruptions, if he calumniates *living magistrates*, or holds out to individuals, that they have a right to run before the public mind in their conduct; that they may oppose by contumacy or force what private reason only disapproves; that they may disobey the law, because their judgment condemns it; or resist the public will, because they honestly wish to change it: he is then a criminal upon every principle of rational policy, as well as upon the immemorial precedents of English justice; because such a person seeks to disunite individuals from their duty to the whole, and excites to overt acts of misconduct in a part of the community, instead of endeavouring to change, by the impulse of reason, that universal assent which, in this and in every country, constitutes the law for all.

I have therefore no difficulty in admitting that, if, upon an attentive perusal of this work, it shall be found that the defendant has promulgated any doctrines which tend to withdraw individuals from their subjection to the law by which the whole nation consents to be governed; nay, if the direct contrary shall not be found to be studiously inculcated—if his book should be found to have warranted or excited that unfortunate criminal who appeared here yesterday to endeavour to relieve himself from imprisonment, by the de:

struction of a prison, while the law of imprisonment remained, or dictated to him the language of defiance which ran through his whole defence—if throughout the whole work there shall be found any syllable or letter, which strikes at the security of property, or which hints that any thing less than the whole nation can constitute the law, or that the law, be what it may, is not the inexorable rule of action for every individual, I willingly yield him up to the justice of the court.

Gentlemen, I say, in the name of Thomas Paine, and in his words as author of the Rights of Man, as written in the very volume that is charged with seeking the destruction of property,

“ The end of all political associations is, The preservation of the rights
“ of man, which rights are liberty, property, and security; that the na-
“ tion is the source of all sovereignty derived from it: the right of proper-
“ ty being secured and inviolable, no one ought to be deprived of it, except
“ in cases of evident public necessity, legally ascertained, and on condition
“ of a previous just indemnity.”

These are undoubtedly the rights of man—the rights for which all governments are established—and the only rights Mr. Paine contends for; but which he thinks (no matter whether right or wrong) are better to be secured by a republican constitution than by the forms of the English government. He instructs me to admit, that, when government is once constituted, no individuals, without rebellion, can withdraw their obedience from it—that all attempts to excite them to it are highly criminal, for the most obvious reasons of policy and justice—that nothing short of the will of a whole people can change or affect the rule by which a nation is to be governed—and that no private opinion, however honestly inimical to the forms or substance of the law, can justify resistance to its authority, while it remains in force.—The author of the Rights of Man not only admits the truth of all this doctrine, but he consents to be convicted, and I also consent for him, unless his work shall be found studiously and painfully to inculcate these great principles of government which it is charged to have been written to destroy.—Let me not, therefore, be suspected to be contending, that it is lawful to write a book pointing out defects in the English government, and exciting individuals to destroy its sanctions, and to refuse obedience. But, on the other hand, I do contend, that it is lawful to address the English nation on those momentous subjects, for had it not been for this unalienable right (thanks be to God and our fathers for establishing it), how should we have had this constitution which we so loudly boast of? If, in the march of the human mind, no man could have gone before the establishments of the time he lived in, how could our establishment, by reiterated changes, have become what it is? If no man could have awakened the public mind to errors and abuses in our government, how could it have passed on from stage to stage, through reformation and revolution, so as to have arrived from barbarism to such a pitch of happiness and perfection that the Attorney General considers it as a profanation to touch it any further, or to look for any future amendment?

In this manner power has reasoned in every age—government, in *its own estimation*, has been at all times a system of perfection; but a free press has examined and detected its errors, and the people have happily reformed them: this freedom has alone made our government what it is, and alone can preserve it; and therefore, under the banners of that freedom, to-day I stand up to defend Thomas Paine.—But how, alas! shall this task be accomplished? How may I expect from you what human nature has not made man for the performance of? How am I to address your reasons, or ask them to pause, amidst the torrent of prejudice which has hurried away the public mind on the subject you are to judge?

Was any Englishman ever so brought as a criminal before an English court of justice?—If I were to ask you, gentlemen of the jury, what is the choicest

fruit that grows upon the tree of English liberty, you would answer, SECURITY UNDER THE LAW. If I were to ask the whole people of England, the return they looked for at the hands of government, for the burthens under which they bend to support it, I shall still be answered, SECURITY UNDER THE LAW; or, in other words, an impartial administration of justice. So sacred, therefore, has the freedom of trial been ever held in England; so anxiously does Justice guard against every possible bias in her path, that if the public mind has been locally agitated upon any subject in judgment, the forum is either changed, or the trial postponed. The circulation of any paper that brings, or which can be supposed to bring, prejudice, or even well founded knowledge, within the reach of a British tribunal, on the spur of an occasion, is not only highly criminal, but defeats itself, by leading to put off the trial which its object was to pervert. On this principle, his lordship will permit me to remind him, that on the trial of the Dean of St. Asaph for a libel, or rather when he was brought to trial, the circulation of books by a society favourable to his defence, was held by the noble lord, as Chief Justice of Chester, to be a reason for not trying the cause; although they contained no matter relative to the Dean, nor to the object of his trial; being only extracts from ancient authors of high reputation, on the general rights of juries to consider the innocence as well as the guilt of the accused, yet still, as the recollection of these rights were pressed forward with a view to affect the proceedings, to guard the principle the proceedings were postponed.

Is the defendant then to be the only exception to these admirable provisions?—Is the English law to judge him, stripped of the armour with which its universal justice encircles all others?—Shall we, in the very act of judging him for detracting from the English government, furnish him with ample matter for just reprobation, instead of detraction? Has not this cause been prejudged through a thousand channels? Has not the work before you been daily publicly reviled, and his person held up to derision and reproach? Has not the public mind been excited, by crying down the very phrase and idea of the Rights of Man? Nay, have not associations of gentlemen, I speak it with regret, because I am persuaded, from what I know of some of them, that they, amongst them at least, thought they were serving the public; yet have they not, in utter contempt and ignorance of that constitution of which they declare themselves to be the guardians, published the grossest attacks upon the defendant? Have they not, even while the cause has been standing here in the paper for immediate trial, published a direct protest against the very work now before you; advertising in the same paper, though under the general description of seditious papers, a reward on the conviction of any person who should dare to sell the book itself, to which their own publication was an answer?—The Attorney-General has spoken of a forced circulation of this work; but how have these prejudging papers been circulated? we all know how: they have been thrown into our carriages in every street; they have met us at every turnpike; and they lie in the areas of all our houses. To complete the triumph of prejudice, that high tribunal, of which I have the honour to be a member, (my learned friends know what I say to be true) has been drawn into this vortex of slander; and some of its members, for I do not speak of the house itself, have thrown the weight of their stations into the same scale.

By all means I maintain that this cause has been prejudged.

It may be said, that I have made no motion to put off the trial for these causes, and that courts of themselves take no cognizance of what passes elsewhere, without facts laid before them. Gentlemen, I know that I should have had equal justice from that quarter, if I had brought myself within the rule. But when should I have been better in the present aspect of things? And therefore I only remind you of all these hardships, that you may recollect that your judgment is to proceed upon that alone which meets you here, upon

the evidence in the cause, and not upon suggestions destructive of every principle of justice.

Having disposed of these foreign prejudices, I hope you will as little regard some arguments that have been offered to you in court. The letter which has been so repeatedly pressed upon you, you ought to dismiss even from your recollection; I have already put it out of the question, as having been written long subsequent to the book, and as being a libel on the king, which no part of the information charges, and which hereafter may be prosecuted as a distinct offence. I consider that letter besides, and indeed have always heard it treated as a forgery, contrived to injure the merits of the cause, and to embarrass me personally in its defence. I have a right so to consider it, because it is unsupported by any thing similar at an early period. The defendant's whole deportment, previous to the publication, has been wholly unexceptionable: he properly desired to be given up as the author of the book, if any enquiry should take place concerning it; and he is not affected in evidence, directly or indirectly, with any illegal or suspicious conduct; not even with having uttered an indiscreet or taunting expression, nor with any one matter or thing, inconsistent with the duty of the best subject in England. His opinions indeed were adverse to our system; but I maintain that **OPINION** is free, and that **CONDUCT** alone is amenable to the law.

You are next desired to judge of the author's mind and intention, by the modes and extent of the circulation of his work. The first part of the Rights of Man, Mr. Attorney-General tells you, he did not prosecute, although it was in circulation through the country for a year and a half together, because it seems it circulated only amongst what he styles the judicious part of the public, who possessed in their capacities and experience an antidote to the poison; but that with regard to the second part now before you, its circulation has been forced into every corner of society; had been printed and reprinted for cheapness even upon whited brown paper, and had crept into the very nurseries of children, as a wrapper for their sweetmeats.

In answer to this statement, which after all stands only upon Mr. Attorney-General's own assertion, unsupported by any kind of proof (no witness having proved the author's personal interference with the sale), I still maintain, that if he had the most anxiously promoted it, the question would remain exactly the same: the question would still be, whether at the time when Paine composed his work, and promoted the most extensive purchase of it, he believed or disbelieved what he had written, and whether he contemplated the happiness or misery of the English nation, to which it is addressed; and whichever of these intentions may be evidenced to your judgments upon reading the book itself, I confess I am utterly at a loss to comprehend how a writer can be supposed to mean something different from what he has written, by an anxiety (common I believe to all authors) that his work should be generally read.

Remember, I am not asking your opinions of the *doctrines themselves*, you have given them already pretty visibly since I began to address you; but I shall appeal not only to you, but to those who, without our leave, will hereafter judge without appeal of all that we are doing to-day; Whether, upon the matter which I hasten to lay before you, you can refuse in justice to pronounce, that from his education—from the accidents and habits of his life—from the time and occasion of the publication—from the circumstances attending it—and from every line and letter of the work itself, and all his other writings, before and *even since* his conscience and understanding (*no matter whether erroneously or not*) were deeply and solemnly impressed with the matters contained in this book, that he addressed it to the reason of the nation at large, and not to the passions of individuals, and that in the issue of its influence, he

contemplated only what appeared to *him* (*though it may not to us*) to be the interest and happiness of England, and of the whole human race. In drawing the one or the other of these conclusions, the book stands first in order, and it shall now speak for itself.

Gentlemen, the whole of it is in evidence before you; the particular parts arraigned having only been read by my consent, upon the presumption that on retiring from the court, you would carefully compare them with the context and all the parts with the whole viewed together. You cannot indeed do justice without it. The most common letter, even in the ordinary course of business, cannot be read in a cause to prove an obligation for twenty shillings without the whole being read, that the writer's meaning may be seen without deception. But in a criminal charge of only four pages and a half, out of a work containing nearly two hundred, you cannot, with even the appearance of common justice, pronounce a judgment without the most deliberate and cautious comparison. I observe that the noble and learned judge confirms me in this observation. But if any given part of a work be legally explanatory of every other part of it, the preface, a fortiori, is the most material; because the preface is the author's own key to his writing: it is there that he takes the reader by the hand, and introduces him to his subject: it is there that the spirit and intention of the whole is laid before him by way of prologue. A preface is meant by the author as a clue to ignorant or careless readers: the author says by it, to every man who chooses to begin where he ought, look at my plan—attend to my distinctions—mark the purpose and limitations of the matter I lay before you.

Let then the calumniators of Thomas Paine now attend to his preface, where, to leave no excuse for ignorance or misrepresentation, he expresses himself thus:

“ I have differed from some professional gentlemen on the subject of prosecutions, and I since find they are falling into my opinion, which I will here state as fully, but as concisely as I can.

“ I will first put a case with respect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a constitution.

“ It would be an act of despotism, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit investigating the principles, good or bad, on which such a law, or any other, is founded.

“ If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppose the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expose its errors, to reason on its defects, and to shew cause why it should be repealed, or why another ought to be substituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it also my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time of every argument to shew its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a discretionary violation, of those which are good.

“ The case is the same with principles and forms of government, or to what are called constitutions and the parts of which they are composed.

“ It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be established, and that mankind are at the expence of supporting it. The defects of every government and constitution, both as to principle and form, must, on a parity of reasoning, be as open to discussion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to society to point them out. When those defects, and the means of remedying them are generally seen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its constitution in the one case, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other.”

Gentlemen, you must undoubtedly wish to deal with every man who comes before you in judgment, as you would be dealt by yourselves; and surely you

will not lay it down to-day as a law to be binding hereafter even upon yourselves, that if you should publish any opinion concerning the existing abuses in your country's government, and point out to the whole public the means of amendment, you are to be acquitted or convicted as any twelve men may happen to agree with you in your opinions. Yet this is precisely what you are asked to do to another: it is precisely the case before you. Mr. Paine expressly says, I obey a law until it is repealed; obedience is not only my principle but my practice, since my disobedience of a law from thinking it bad, might apply to justify another man in the disobedience of a good one; and thus individuals would give the rule for themselves, and not society for all.

Gentlemen, you will presently see that the same principle pervades the rest of the work; and I am the more anxious to call your attention to it, however repetition may tire you, because it unfolds the whole principle of my argument: for, if you find a sentence in the whole book that invests any individual, or any number of individuals, or any community short of the whole nation, with a power of changing any part of the law or constitution, I abandon the cause—YES, I freely abandon it, because I will not affront the majesty of a court of justice by maintaining propositions which, even upon the surface of them, are false. Mr. Paine, page 255—258, goes on thus:

“ When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accomplished by reason. Rebellion consists in forcibly opposing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government.—There ought, therefore, to be, in every nation, a method of occasionally ascertaining the state of public opinion with respect to government.

“ There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter respecting a general reform; and, by the same right that two persons can confer on such a subject, a thousand may. The object in all such preliminary proceedings is, to find out what the general sense of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or choose to pay ten times more taxes than there is occasion for, it has a right so to do; and, so long as the majority do not impose conditions on the minority different to what they impose on themselves, though there may be much error, there is no injustice; neither will the error continue long. Reason and discussion will soon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By such a process no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their interest and happiness are included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.”

Gentlemen, these are the sentiments of the author of the Rights of Man; and, whatever his opinion may be of the defects in our government, it never can change our sentiments concerning it, if our sentiments be just; and a writing can never be seditious in the sense of the English law, which states that the government leans on the universal will for its support.

Gentlemen, this universal will is the best and securest title which his Majesty and his family have to the throne of these kingdoms; and in proportion to the wisdom of our institutions, the title must in common sense become the stronger: so little idea, indeed, have I of any other, that in my place in Parliament not a week ago, I considered it as the best way of expressing my attachment to the constitution, as established at the revolution, to declare (I believe in the presence of the heir apparent of the crown, for whom I have the greatest personal zeal) that his Majesty reigned in England, by choice and consent, as the magistrate of the English people; not indeed a consent and choice by personal election, like the King of Poland, the worst of all possible

constitutions; but by the election of a family for great national objects, in defiance of that hereditary right, which only becomes tyranny, in the sense of Mr. Paine, when it claims to inherit a nation, instead of governing by their consent, and continuing for its benefit.

Gentlemen, this sentiment has the advantage of Mr. Burke's high authority, who says with great truth, in a letter to his constituents, "Too little dependence cannot be had at this time of day on names and prejudices: the eyes of mankind are opened; and communities must be held together by a visible and solid interest." I believe, Gentlemen of the Jury, that the Prince of Wales will always render this title dear to the people. The Attorney General can only tell you what he believes of him; I can tell you what I know, and what I am bound to declare, since this prince may be traduced and calumniated in every part of the kingdom, without its coming often in question, till brought in to load a defence with matter collateral to the charge. I therefore assert what the Attorney General can only hope, that, whenever that Prince shall come to the throne of this country (which I hope, but by the course of nature, will never happen), he will make the Constitution of Great Britain the foundation of all his conduct.

Having now, Gentlemen, established the author's general intention by his own introduction, which is the best and fairest exposition, let us next look at the occasion which gave it birth.

The Attorney General, throughout the whole course of his address to you (I knew it would be so), has avoided the most distant notice or hint of any circumstance having led to the appearance of the author in the political world, after a silence of so many years; he has not even pronounced, or even glanced at the name of Mr. Burke, but has left you to take it for granted that the defendant volunteered this delicate and momentous subject; and that, without being led to it by the provocation of political controversy, he had seized a favourable moment to stigmatise, from mere malice, and against his own confirmed opinions, the Constitution of this Country.

Gentlemen, my learned friend knows too well my respect and value for him to suppose that I am charging him with a wilful suppression; I know him to be incapable of it; he knew it would come from me. He will permit me, however, to lament that it should have been left for me, at this late period of the cause, to inform you, that, not only the work before you, but the First Part, of which it is a natural continuation, were written *avowedly, and upon the face of them*, IN ANSWER TO MR. BURKE. They were written besides under circumstances which I shall hereafter explain, and in the course of which explanation I may have occasion to cite a few passages from the works of that celebrated person.—And I shall speak of him with the highest respect: for, with whatever contempt he may delight to look down upon my humble talents, however he may disparage the principles which direct my public conduct, he shall never force me to forget the regard which this country owes to him for the writings which he has left upon record for the illumination of our most distant posterity. After the gratitude which we owe to God for the divine gifts of reason and understanding, our next thanks are due to those from the fountain of whose enlightened minds they are fed and fructified. But pleading, as I do, the cause of freedom of opinions, I shall not give offence by remarking that this great author has been thought to have changed some of his; and, if Mr. Paine had not thought so, I should not now be addressing you, because the book which is my subject would never have been written. Who is right and who is wrong, in the contention of doctrines, I have repeatedly disclaimed to be the question; I can only say that Mr. Paine may be right throughout, but that Mr. Burke cannot—Mr. Paine has been uniform in his opinions, but Mr. Burke has not—Mr. Burke can only be right in part; but, should Mr. Paine be even mistaken in the whole, still I am not

removed from the principle of his defence. My defence has nothing to do with either the concealment or rectitude of his doctrines. I admit Mr. Paine to be a republican; you shall soon see what made him one—I do not seek to shade or qualify his attack upon our constitution; I put my defence on no such matter—he undoubtedly means to declare it to be defective in its forms, and contaminated with abuses, which, in his judgment, will one day or other bring on the ruin of us all: it is in vain to mince the matter; this is the scope of his work. But still, if it contains no attack upon the King's Majesty, nor upon any other living magistrate; if it excites to no resistance to magistracy, but, on the contrary, if it even inculcates, as it does, obedience to government, then, whatever may be its defects, the question continues as before, and ever must remain an unmixed question of the liberty of the press. I therefore considered it as no breach of professional duty, nor injurious to the cause I am defending, to express my own admiration of the real principles of our constitution—a constitution which I hope never to see give way to any other—a constitution which has been productive of various benefits, and which will produce many more hereafter, if we have wisdom enough to pluck up those weeds that grow in the richest soils and amongst the brightest flowers. I agree with the merchants of London, that the English government is equal to the reformation of its own abuses; and, as an inhabitant of the city, I would have signed their Declaration, if I had known, *of my own knowledge*, the facts recited in its preamble. But abuses the English constitution unquestionably has, which call loudly for reformation, the existence of which has been the theme of our greatest statesmen, which have too plainly formed the principles of the defendant, and created the very conjuncture which produced his book.

Gentlemen, we all but too well remember the calamitous situation in which our country stood but a few years ago—a situation which no man can look back upon without horror, nor feel himself safe from relapsing into again, while the causes remain which produced it. The event I allude to you must know to be the American war and the still existing causes of it, the corruptions of this government. In those days it was not thought virtue by the patriots of England to conceal their existence from the people; but then, as now, authority condemned them as disaffected subjects, and defeated the ends they sought by their promulgation.

Hear the opinion of Sir George Saville;—not his speculative opinion concerning the structure of our government in the abstract, but his opinion of the settled abuses which prevailed in his own time, and which continue at this moment. But first let me remind you who Sir George Saville was—I fear we shall hardly look upon his like again—How shall I describe him to you?—In my own words I cannot. I was lately commended by Mr. Burke, in the House of Commons, for strengthening my own language by an appeal to Dr. Johnson. Were the honourable gentleman present at this moment, he would no doubt doubly applaud my choice in resorting to his own works for the description of Sir George Saville:

“His fortune is among the largest; a fortune, which, wholly unincumbered as it is, without one single charge from luxury, vanity, or excess, sinks under the benevolence of its dispenser. This private benevolence, expanding itself into patriotism, renders his whole being the estate of the public, in which he has not reserved a *peculium* for himself of profit, diversion, or relaxation. During the session, the first in, and the last out of the House of Commons; he passes from the senate to the camp; and, seldom seeing the seat of his ancestors, he is always in Parliament to serve his country, or in the field to defend it.”

It is impossible to ascribe to such a character any principle but patriotism, when he expressed himself as follows:

“ I return to you baffled and dispirited, and I am sorry that truth obliges me to add, with hardly a ray of hope of seeing any change in the miserable course of public calamity.

“ On this melancholy day of account, in rendering up to you my trust, I deliver to you your share of a country maimed and weakened; its treasure lavished and mis-spent; its honours faded; and its conduct the laughing-stock of Europe: our nation in a manner without allies or friends, except such as we have hired to destroy our fellow-subjects, and to ravage a country, in which we once claimed an invaluable share. I return to you some of your principal privileges impeached and mangled. And, lastly, I leave you, as I conceive, at this hour and moment fully, effectually, and absolutely, under the discretion and power of a military force, which is to act without waiting for the authority of the civil magistrates.

“ Some have been accused of exaggerating the public misfortunes, nay of having endeavoured to help forward the mischief, that they might afterwards raise discontents. I am willing to hope, that neither my temper nor my situation in life, will be thought naturally to urge me to promote misery, discord, or confusion, or to exult in the subversion of order, or in the ruin of property. I have no reason to contemplate with pleasure the poverty of our country, the increase of our debts, and of our taxes; or the decay of our commerce.—Trust not, however, to my report; reflect, compare, and judge for yourselves.

“ But, under all these disheartening circumstances, I could yet entertain a cheerful hope, and undertake again the commission with alacrity, as well as zeal, if I could see any effectual steps taken to remove the original cause of the mischief—‘ Then would there be a hope.’

“ But, till the purity of the constituent body, and thereby that of the representative, be restored, there is NONE.

“ I gladly embrace this most public opportunity of delivering my sentiments, not only to all my constituents, but to those likewise not my constituents, whom yet, in the large sense, I represent, and am faithfully to serve.

“ I look upon restoring election and representation in some degree (for I expect no miracles) to their original purity, to be that, without which all other efforts will be vain and ridiculous.

“ If something be not done, you may, indeed, retain the outward form of your constitution, but not the power thereof.”

Such were the words of that great good man, lost with those of many others of his time, and his fame, as far as power could hurt it, put in the shade along with them.—The consequences we have all seen and felt: America, from an obedient and affectionate colony, became an independent nation; and two millions of people, nursed in the very lap of our monarchy, became the willing subjects of a republican constitution.

Gentlemen, in that great and calamitous conflict Mr. Burke and Mr. Paine fought in the same field of reason together, but with different successes. Mr. Burke spoke to a Parliament in England, such as Sir George Saville describes it, that had no ears but for sounds that flattered its corruptions. Mr. Paine, on the other hand, spoke TO A PEOPLE; reasoned with them, that they were bound by no subjection to any sovereignty, further than their own benefits connected them; and by these powerful arguments prepared the minds of the American people for that GLORIOUS, JUST, and HAPPY revolution.

Gentlemen, I have a right to distinguish it by that appellation, because I aver that at this moment there is as sacred a regard to property; as inviolable a security to all the rights of individuals; lower taxes; fewer grievances; less to deplore, and more admire, in the constitution of America, than that of any other country under heaven. I wish indeed to except our own, but

I cannot even do that, till it shall be purged of those abuses which, though they obscure and deform the surface, have not as yet (*thank God*) destroyed the vital parts.

Why then is Mr. Paine to be calumniated, and reviled, because out of a people consisting of near three millions, he alone did not remain attached in opinion to a monarchy:—Remember, that all the blood which was shed in America, and to which he was for years a melancholy and indignant witness, was shed by the authority of the crown of Great Britain, under the influence of its parliament, such as Sir George Saville has described it, and such as Mr. Burke himself will be called upon by and by in more glowing colours to paint it. How then can it be wondered at that Mr. Paine should return to this country in his heart a republican? Was he not equally republican when he wrote *Common Sense*?—yet that volume has been sold without restraint or prosecution in every shop in England ever since, and which nevertheless (*I appeal to the book, which I have in court, and which is in every body's hands*) contains every one principle of government, and every abuse in the British constitution, which is to be found in the *Rights of Man*. Yet Mr. Burke himself saw no reason to be alarmed at its publication, nor to cry down its contents, even when America, which was swayed by it, was in arms against the crown of Great Britain. You shall hear his opinion of it, in his letter to the sheriffs of Bristol, pages 33 and 34.

“The court gazette accomplished what the abettors of independence had attempted in vain. When that disingenuous compilation, and strange medley of railing and flattery, was adduced, as a proof of the united sentiments of the people of Great Britain, there was a great change throughout all America. The tide of popular affection, which had still set towards the parent country, began immediately to turn, and to flow with greater rapidity in a contrary course. Far from concealing these wild declarations of enmity, *the author of the celebrated pamphlet which prepared the minds of the people for independence*, insists largely on the multitude and the spirit of these addresses; and draws an argument from them, which (if the fact were as he supposes) must be irresistible. For I never knew a writer on the theory of government so partial to authority, as not to allow, that the hostile mind of the rulers to their people, did fully justify a change of government; nor can any reason whatever be given, why one people should voluntarily yield any degree of pre-eminence to another, but on a supposition of great affection and benevolence towards them. Unfortunately your rulers, trusting to other things, took no notice of this great principle of connexion.”

But there is a time, it seems, for all things.

Gentlemen, the consequences of this mighty revolution are too notorious to require illustration. No audience would sit to hear (what every body has seen and felt,) the independence of America notoriously produced, not by remote and circuitous effect, but directly and palpably, the revolutions which now agitate Europe, and which portend such new changes over the face of the earth. Let governors take warning. The revolution in France was the consequence of her incurably corrupt and profligate government. God forbid that I should be thought to lean, by this declaration, upon her unfortunate monarch, bending, perhaps at this moment, under afflictions which my heart sinks within me to think of; but, when I speak with detestation of the former politics of the French court, I fasten as little of them upon that fallen and unhappy prince, as I impute to our gracious sovereign the corruptions of our own government. I desire, indeed, in the distinctest manner, to be understood that I mean to speak of his Majesty, not only with that obedience and duty which I owe to him as a subject, but with that justice which I think is due to him from all men who examine his conduct either in public or private life.

Gentlemen, Mr. Paine happened to be in England when the French revolution took place, and notwithstanding what he must be supposed and allowed from his history to have felt upon such a subject, he remained wholly silent and inactive. The people of this country too appeared to be indifferent spectators of the animating scene. They saw without visible emotion, despotism destroyed, and the King of France, by his own consent, become the first magistrate of a free people. Certainly, at least, it produced none of those effects which are so deprecated by government at present; nor, most probably, ever would, if it had not occurred to the celebrated person, whose name I must so often mention, voluntarily to provoke the subject; a subject which, if dangerous to be discussed, he should not have led to the discussion: for surely, it is not to be endured, that any private man is to publish a creed for a whole nation; to tell us that we are not to think for ourselves—to impose his own fetters upon the human mind—to dogmatise at discretion—and that no man shall sit down to answer him without being guilty of a libel. I assert, that if it be a libel to mistake our constitution—to support it by means that tend to destroy it—and to choose the most dangerous season for the interference, Mr. Burke is that libeller; but not therefore the object of a criminal prosecution: for, whilst I am defending the motives of one man, I have neither right nor disposition to criminate the motives of another. All I contend for, is a fact that cannot be controverted, viz. that this officious interference was the origin of Mr. Paine's book. I put my cause upon its being the origin of it—the avowed origin—as will abundantly appear from the introduction and preface to both parts, and throughout the whole body of the work; nay, from the very work of Mr. Burke himself, to which both of them are answers.

Gentlemen, for the history of that celebrated work I appeal to itself.

When the French revolution had arrived at some of its early stages, a few, and but a few, persons (not to be named when compared with the nation) took a visible interest in these mighty events; an interest well worthy of Englishmen. They saw a pernicious system of government, which had led to cruel desolating wars, and had been for ages the scourge of Great Britain, giving way to a system which seemed to promise harmony and peace amongst the nations. They saw this with virtuous and peaceable satisfaction: And a reverend divine*, eminent for his eloquence, recollecting that the issues of life are in the hands of God, saw no profaneness in mixing the subject with public thanksgiving; reminding the people of this country of their own glorious deliverance in former ages. It happened, also, that a society of gentlemen, France being then a neutral nation, and her own monarch swearing almost daily upon her altars to maintain the new constitution, thought they infringed no law by sending a general congratulation. Their numbers, indeed, were very inconsiderable; so much so, that Mr. Burke, with more truth than wisdom, begins his volume with a sarcasm upon their insignificance.

“Until very lately he had never heard of such a club. It certainly never occupied a moment of his thoughts; nor, he believed, those of any person out of their own set.”

Why then make their proceedings the subject of alarm throughout England?—There had been no prosecution against them, nor any charge founded upon suspicion of disaffection against any of their body. But Mr. Burke thought it was referred for his eloquence to whip these curs of faction to their kennels. How he has succeeded, I appeal to all that has happened since the introduction of his schism in the British empire, by giving to the King, whose title was questioned by no man, a title which it is his Majesty's most solemn interest to disclaim.

After having, in his first work, lashed Dr. Price in a strain of eloquent irony for considering the monarchy to be elective, which he could not but know Dr. Price, in the literal sense of election, neither did or could possibly consider it, Mr. Burke published a second treatise; in which, after reprinting many passages from Mr. Paine's former work, he ridicules and denies the supposed right of the people to change their governments, in the following words:

"The French revolution, *say they*," (speaking of the English societies) "was the act of the majority of the people; and if the majority of any other people, *the people of England, for instance*, wish to make the same change, they have the same right; just the same undoubtedly; that is, none at all."

And then, after speaking of the subserviency of will to duty, (in which I agree with him,) he, in a substantive sentence, maintains the same doctrine; thus:

"The constitution of a country being once settled upon some compact, tacit or expressed, there is no power existing of force to alter it, without the breach of the covenant, or the consent of all the parties. Such is the nature of a contract."

So that if reason, or even revelation itself, were now to demonstrate to us, that our constitution was mischievous in its effects; that, to use Mr. Attorney General's expression, we have been insane for the many centuries we have supported it; yet that still if the King had not forfeited his title to the crown, nor the Lords their privileges, the universal voice of the whole people of England could not build up a new government upon a legitimate basis!

Gentlemen, not to argue for the present against such a proposition, and supposing it could, beyond all controversy, be maintained; for heaven's sake, let wisdom never utter it! Let policy and prudence for ever conceal it! If you seek the stability of the English government, rather put the book of Mr. Paine, which calls it bad, into every hand in the kingdom, than doctrines which bid human nature rebel even against that which is the best.—Say to the people of England, Look at your constitution, there it lies before you—the work of your pious fathers, handed down as a sacred deposit from generation to generation, the result of wisdom and virtue, and its parts cemented together with kindred blood. There are, indeed, a few spots upon its surface; but the same principle which reared the structure will brush them all away: you may keep it, or you may destroy it.—To such an address what would be the answer? A chorus of the nation—YES, WE WILL PRESERVE IT. But say to the same nation, even of the very same constitution, It is yours, such as it is, for the better or for worse; it is strapped upon your backs, to carry it as beasts of burthen, and you have no jurisdiction to cast it off. Let this be your position, and you instantly raise up (I appeal to every man's consciousness of his own nature) a spirit of uneasiness and discontent. Yet it is the controversy alone, which this useless and mischievous proposition stirred up, that has pointed most of the passages arraigned before you, which it will be presently my duty to explain.

But let the prudence of the argument be what it may, the argument itself is untenable.

His Majesty undoubtedly was not elected to the throne. No man can be supposed, in the teeth of fact, to have contended it; but did not the people of England elect King William, and break the hereditary succession? and does not his Majesty's title grow out of that election? It is one of the charges against the defendant, his having denied the parliament which called the Prince of Orange to the throne to have been a legal convention of the whole people; and is not the foundation of that charge, that it was such a legal convention, and that it was intended to be so? and if it was so, did not the people then confer the crown upon King William without any regard to he-

editary right? Did they not cut off the Prince of Wales, who stood directly in the line of succession, and who had incurred no personal forfeiture? Did they not give their deliverer an estate in the crown totally new and unprecedented in the law or history of the country? And, lastly, might they not, by the same authority, have given the royal inheritance to the family of a stranger? Mr. Justice Blackstone, in his Commentaries, in terms, asserts that they might; and ascribes their choice of King William, and the subsequent limitations of the crown, not to want of jurisdiction, but to their true origin, prudence and discretion in not disturbing a valuable institution further than public safety and necessity dictated.

The English government stands then on this public consent, the true root of all governments. And I agree with Mr. Burke, that, while it is well administered, it is not in the power of factions or libels to disturb it; though, when ministers are in fault, they are sure to set down all disturbances to these causes. This is most justly and eloquently exemplified in the Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents, pages 5 and 6.

“Ministers contend that no adequate provocation has been given for so spreading a discontent, our affairs having been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and consummate wisdom. The wicked industry of some libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few disappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

“Nothing, indeed, can be more unnatural than the present convulsions of this country, if the above account be a true one. I confess I shall assent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulsion of the clearest and firmest proofs; because their account resolves itself into this short but discouraging proposition, ‘That we have a very good ministry, but that we are a very bad people; that we set ourselves to bite the hand that feeds us; and, with a malignant insanity, oppose the measures, and ungratefully villify the persons of those whose sole object is our own peace and prosperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character (for such they are constantly represented by these gentlemen), are sufficient to excite this disturbance, very perverse must be the disposition of that people, amongst whom such a disturbance can be excited by such means.’”

He says true: never were serious disturbances excited by such means!

But to return to the argument.—Let us now see how the rights of the people stand upon authority, and whether this great source of government is not maintained by persons on whom my friend will find it hard to fasten the character of libellers.

I shall begin with the most modern author on the subject of government—a gentleman, whose work lies spread out before me, as it often does for my delight and instruction in my leisure hours. I have also, by the favour of a friend who sits near me in court, the honour of his personal acquaintance. He is a man, perhaps more than any other, devoted to the real constitution of the country, as will be found throughout his valuable work; and he is a person, besides, of great learning, which enabled him to infuse much useful knowledge into my learned friend who introduced me to him*. I speak of Mr. Paley, Archdeacon of Carlisle, and of his work, entitled, The Principles of Political and Moral Philosophy, in which he investigates the first principles of all governments—a discussion not thought dangerous till lately: and I hope we shall soon get rid of this ridiculous panic.

Mr. Paley professes to think of governments what the Christian religion was thought of by its first teachers:—‘If it be of God it will stand;’ and he puts the duties of obedience to them upon free will and moral duty.

* Mr. Law, King’s Counsel.

After dissenting from Mr. Locke as to the origin of governments in compact, he says,

“Wherefore, rejecting the intervention of a compact as unfounded in its principle, and dangerous in the application, we assign for the only ground of the subjects’ obligation, **THE WILL OF GOD, AS COLLECTED FROM EXPEDIENCY.**”

“The steps by which the argument proceeds are few and direct.—‘It is the will of God that the happiness of human life be promoted:’—this is the first step, and the foundation, not only of this, but of every moral conclusion.—‘Civil society conduces to that end:’—this is the second proposition. ‘Civil societies cannot be upheld, unless in each, the interest of the whole society be binding upon every part and member of it:’—this is the third step, and conducts us to the conclusion, namely,—‘That, so long as the interest of the whole society requires it (that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconvenience) it is the will of God (which will universally determines our duty) that the established government be obeyed,—and no longer.’”

“But who shall judge of this? We answer, ‘*Every man for himself.*’ In contentions between the sovereign and the subject, the parties acknowledge no common arbitrator; and it would be absurd to commit the decision to those whose conduct has provoked the question, and whose own interest, authority, and fate, are immediately concerned in it. The danger of error and abuse is no objection to the rule of expediency, because every other rule is liable to the same or greater; and every rule that can be propounded upon the subject (like all rules which appeal to, or bind the conscience) must, in the application, depend upon private judgment. It may be observed, however, that it ought equally to be accounted the exercise of a man’s private judgment, whether he determines by reasonings and conclusions of his own, or submits to be directed by the advice of others, provided he be free to choose his guide.”

He then proceeds in a manner rather inconsistent with the principles entertained by my learned friend in his opening to you:—

“No usage, law, or authority whatever, is so binding, that it need or ought to be continued; when it may be changed with advantage to the community. The family of the prince—the order of succession—the prerogative of the crown—the form and parts of the legislature—together with the respective powers, office, duration, and mutual dependency of the several parts; are all only so many laws, mutable, like other laws, whenever expediency requires, either by the ordinary act of the legislature, or, if the occasion deserve it, **BY THE INTERPOSITION OF THE PEOPLE.**”

No man can say that Mr. Paley intended to diffuse discontent by this declaration. He must therefore be taken to think with me, that freedom and affection, and the sense of advantages, are the best and the only supports of government.—On the same principle, he then goes on to say,—“These points are wont to be approached with a kind of awe; they are represented to the mind as principles of the constitution, settled by our ancestors, and being settled, to be no more committed to innovation or debate; as foundations never to be stirred; as the terms and conditions of the social compact, to which every citizen of the state has engaged his fidelity, by virtue of a promise which he cannot recall. Such reasons have no place in our system.”

Such are the sentiments of this excellent author, and there is no part of Mr. Paine’s work, from the one end of it to the other, that advances any other proposition.

But the Attorney General will say, these are the grave speculative opinions of a friend to the English Government, whereas Mr. Paine is its pro-

fessed enemy; what then? the principle is, that every man, while he obeys the laws, is to think for himself, and to conduct himself as he thinks. The very ends of society exact this licence, and the policy of the law, in its provisions for its security, has tacitly sanctioned it. The real fact is, that writings against a free and well-proportioned Government, need not be guarded against by laws. They cannot often exist, and never with effect. The just and awful principles of society, are rarely brought forward, but when they are insulted and denied, or abused in practice: Mr. Locke's Essay on Government, we owe to Sir Robert Filmer, as we owe Mr. Paine's to Mr. Burke; and indeed, between the arguments of Filmer and Burke, I see no essential difference; since it is not worth disputing, whether a King exists by *Divine* right, or indissoluble *Human* compact, if he exists whether we will or no: if his existence be without our consent, and to continue without our benefit, it matters not a farthing, whether his title be from God or from Man.

That his title is from man, and from every generation of man, without regard to the determination of former ones, hear from Mr. Locke, "*All men; say they, (i. e. Filmer and his adherents,) 'are born under government, and therefore they cannot be at liberty to begin a new one. Every one is born a subject to his father, or his prince, and is therefore under the perpetual tie of subjection and allegiance.*" It is plain, mankind never owned nor considered any such natural *subjection that they were born in*, to one or to the other, that tied them, without their own consents, to a subjection to them and their heirs."

"It is true, that whatever engagements or promises any one has made for himself, he is under the obligation of them, but cannot, by any compact whatsoever, bind his children or posterity; for his son, when a man, being altogether as free as the father, any *act of the father can no more give away the liberty of the son*, than it can of any body else."

So much for Mr. Locke's opinion of the rights of mankind. Let us now examine his idea of the supposed danger of trusting them with them.

"Perhaps it will be said, that the people being ignorant, and always discontented, to lay the foundation of government in the unsteady opinion and uncertain humour of the people, is to expose it to certain ruin: and no government will be able long to subsist, if the people may set up a new legislature, whenever they take offence at the old one. To this, I answer quite the contrary: people are not so easily got out of their old forms, as some are apt to suggest: they are hardly to be prevailed with to amend the acknowledged faults in the frame they have been accustomed to; and if there be any original defects, or adventitious ones introduced by time, or corruption, it is not an easy thing to be changed, even when all the world sees there is an opportunity for it. This slowness and aversion in the people to quit their old constitutions, has in the many revolutions which have been seen in this kingdom, in this and former ages, still kept us to, or, after some interval of fruitless attempts, still brought us back again to our old legislative of king, lords and commons: and whatever provocations have made the crown be taken from some of our princes heads, they never carried the people so far as to place it in another line."

Gentlemen, I wish I had strength to go on with all that is material, but I have read enough, not only to maintain the true principles of government, but to put to shame the narrow system of distrusting the people.

It may be said, that Mr. Locke went great lengths in his positions, to beat down the contrary doctrine of divine right, which was then endangering the new establishment. But that cannot be objected to David Hume, who maintains the same doctrine; speaking of the Magna Charta in his history, vol. ii. page 88, he says, "It must be confessed, that the former articles of the great charter, contain such mitigations and explanations of the feudal law, as

“ are reasonable and equitable ; and that the latter involve all the chief outlines of a legal Government, and provide for the equal distribution of justice and free enjoyment of property ; the great object for which political society was founded by men, *which the people have a perpetual and unalienable right to recall* ; and which no time, nor precedent, no statute, nor positive institution, ought to deter them from keeping ever uppermost in their thoughts and attention.”

These authorities are sufficient to rest on, yet I cannot omit Mr. Burke himself, who is, if possible, still more distinct on the subject. Speaking not of the ancient people of England, but of Colonies planted almost within our memories, he says, “ If there be one fact in the world perfectly clear, it is this ; That the disposition of the people of America is wholly averse to any other than a free Government, and this is indication enough to any honest statesman, how he ought to adapt whatever power he finds in his hands to their case. If any ask me what a free Government is, I answer, **THAT IT IS WHAT THE PEOPLE THINK SO ; AND THAT THEY AND NOT I, ARE THE NATURAL, LAWFUL, AND COMPETENT JUDGES OF THIS MATTER.** If they practically allow me a greater degree of authority over them than is consistent with any correct ideas of perfect freedom, I ought to thank them for so great a trust, and not to endeavour to prove from thence, that they have reasoned amiss, and that having gone so far, by analogy, they must hereafter have no enjoyment but by my pleasure.”

Gentlemen, I am sorry to feel my time considerably consumed before I am arrived at what I conceive to be the material subject of your consideration. For all that I have been stating now, is only to shew ; that there is not that novelty in the opinions of the defendant, that should lead you to think that he does not *bona fide* entertain them, much less when connected with the history of his life, which I therefore brought in review before you.—But still the great question remains unargued. Had he a right to promulgate these opinions ? Gentlemen, if he entertained them, I shall argue that he had—And although my arguments upon the Liberty of the Press, may not to-day be honoured with your, or the Court’s approbation, I shall retire not at all disheartened, consoling myself with the reflection, that a season may arrive for their reception.—The most essential freedoms of mankind have been but slowly and gradually received, and so very late, indeed, do some of them come to maturity, that notwithstanding the Attorney General tells you that the very question I am now agitating, is most peculiarly for *your* consideration, AS A JURY, under our ANCIENT Constitution, yet I must remind both you and him, that your jurisdiction to consider and deal with it at all in judgment, is but A YEAR OLD.—When, before that late period, I ventured to maintain this very RIGHT OF A JURY over the question of Libel under the same *ancient* Constitution. (I do not mean before my Lord, for the matter was gone to rest in the Courts, at least long before he came to sit where he does.) But when, before a Noble and Reverend Magistrate of the most exalted understanding, and of the most uncorrupted integrity, to give effect to it*, I had occasion to maintain it, he treated me, not with disregard indeed, for of that his nature was incapable ; but he put me aside with indulgence, as you do a child while it is lisping its prattle out of season ; and if this cause had been tried then, instead of now, the Defendant must have been instantly convicted on the proof of the publication, whatever *you* might have thought of his case.—Yet, I have lived to see it resolved, by an almost unanimous vote of the whole Parliament of England, that I had all along been in the right. If this

* Earl Mansfield

be not an awful lesson of caution concerning opinions, where are such lessons to be read!

Gentlemen, I have insisted, at great length, upon the origin of Government being in the consent of the people, and detailed the authorities which you have heard upon the subject, because I consider it to be not only a support, but, indeed, the only foundation of the Liberty of the Press. If Mr. Burke be right in HIS principles of Government, I admit that the Press, in my sense of its freedom, ought not to be free, *nor free in any sense at all*; and that all Addresses to the people upon the subject of Government; and all speculations of amendment, of what kind or nature soever, are illegal and criminal:—For, if the people have, without possible recall, delegated all their authorities, they have no jurisdiction to act, and therefore none to think, upon such subjects; and it is a libel to arraign Government or any of its acts, before those that have no jurisdiction to correct them. But on the other hand, as it is a settled rule in the Law of England, that the subject may always address a competent jurisdiction on every matter within it, no legal argument can shake the freedom of the Press in my sense of it, if I am supported in my doctrines concerning the great unalienable rights of the people, to change or to reform their Governments.

Gentlemen, it is because the Liberty of the Press resolves itself into this great issue, that it has been in every time and country, the last liberty which subjects have been able to wrest from power.—Other liberties are held under Governments, but the liberty of opinion keeps Governments themselves in due subjection to their duties. This has produced the martyrdom of truth in every age, and the world has only purged itself from ignorance with the innocent blood of those who have enlightened it.

Gentlemen, my strength and time are wasted, and I can only make this melancholy history pass like a shadow before you.

I shall begin with the grand type and example.

The universal God of Nature,—the Saviour of mankind,—the Fountain of all Light, who came to pluck the world from eternal darkness, expired upon a cross the scoff of infidel scorn; and his blessed Apostles followed him in the train of Martyrs. When he came in the flesh, he might have come like the Mahometan Prophet, as a powerful Sovereign, and propagated that religion with an unconquerable sword, which even now, after the lapse of ages, is but slowly moving, under the influence of reason, over the face of the earth: But such a process would have been inconsistent with his mission, which was to confound the pride, and to establish the universal rights of men; he came therefore in the lowly state which is represented in the Gospel, and preached his consolations to the poor.

When the foundation of this religion was discovered to be invulnerable and immortal, we find political power taking the church into partnership; thus began the corruptions both of Religion and Civil Power, and, hand in hand together, what havoc have they not made in the world; ruling by ignorance and the persecution of truth; but this very persecution only hastened the revival of letters and liberty, which was to destroy the one and to arise up the other. Nay, you will find, that in the exact proportion that knowledge and learning have been beat down and fettered, they have destroyed the Governments that bound them. The Court of Star-Chamber, the first restriction on the Press of England, was erected in 1637. From that moment no man could legally write without an Imprimatur from the State? but truth and freedom found their way with greater force through secret channels, and the unhappy Charles, unwarned by a free press, was brought in eleven years afterwards to an ignominious death.

When men can freely communicate their thoughts and their sufferings, real or imaginary, their passions spend themselves in air, like gun-powder

scattered upon the surface; but pent up by terrors, they work unseen like subterraneous fire, burst forth in earthquake, and destroy every thing in course. Let reason be opposed to reason, and argument to argument, and every good Government will be safe.

The Usurper, Cromwell, pursued the same system of restraint in support of his Government, and the end of it speedily followed.

At the Restoration of Charles the Second, the Star-Chamber Ordinance of 1637, was worked up into an Act of Parliament, and was followed up during that reign, and the short one that followed it, by the most sanguinary prosecutions; but what fact in history is more notorious, than that this blind and contemptible policy prepared and hastened on the Revolution! At that great æra these cobwebs were all brushed away: The freedom of the Press was regenerated, and the Country, ruled by its affections, has since enjoyed a century of tranquillity and glory.—Thus I have maintained, by English History, that in proportion as the Press has been free, English Government has been secure.

Gentlemen, I will now support the same important truth by very great authorities. Upon a subject of this kind resort cannot be had to Law Cases. The ancient Law of England know nothing of such Libels; they began, and should have ended, with the Star-Chamber. What writings are slanderous of individuals, must be looked for where these prosecutions are recorded; but upon general subjects we must go to general writers. If, indeed, I were to refer to obscure authors, I might be answered, that my very authorities were Libels, instead of justifications or examples; but this cannot be said with effect of great men, whose works are classics in our language, taught in our schools, and printed under the eye of Government.

Gentlemen, I shall begin with the Poet Milton, a great authority in all learning.—It may be said, indeed, he was a Republican, but that would only prove that Republicanism is not incompatible with virtue; it may be said too, that the work which I cite was written against previous Licensing, which is not contended for to-day. But, in my opinion, if every work is to be adjudged a libel, which is adverse to the wishes of Government, or to the opinions of those who may try it, the revival of a Licenser would be a security to the public: For, if I present my book to a Magistrate appointed by law, if he rejects it, I have only to forbear from the publication, and in the forbearance I am safe; and he too is answerable to Law for the abuse of his authority. But, upon the argument of to-day, a man must print at his peril, without any guide to the principles of judgment, upon which his work may be afterwards prosecuted and condemned. Milton's argument therefore applies, and was meant to apply, to every interruption to writing, which, while they oppress the individual, endanger the State.

“ We have them not,” says Milton, “ that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors, elder or later, nor from the modern custom of any reformed city, or church abroad; but from the most antichristian council, and the most tyrannous inquisition that ever existed. Till then, books were ever as freely admitted into the world as any other birth; *the issue of the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb.*”

“ To the pure all things are pure; not only meats and drinks, but all kind of knowledge whether good or evil; the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defiled.

“ Bad books serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn and to illustrate. Whereof, what better witness can we expect I should produce, than one of your own, now sitting in parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, *Mr. Selden*? whose volume of natural and national laws, proves, not only by great authorities brought together,

“ but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative,
 “ that all opinions, yea, errors, known, read, and collated, are of main ser-
 “ vice and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest.

“ Opinions and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolized and
 “ traded in by tickets and statutes, and standards. We must not think to
 “ make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land, to mark and li-
 “ cense it like our broad cloth and our woolpacks.”

“ Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for if we be so jea-
 “ lous over them that we cannot trust them with an English pamphlet, what
 “ do we but censure them, for a giddy, vicious, and ungrounded people; in
 “ such a sick and weak estate of faith and discretion, as to be able to take
 “ nothing down but through the pipe of a Licenser. That this is care or
 “ love of them we cannot pretend.

“ Those corruptions which it seeks to prevent, break in faster at doors
 “ which cannot be shut.

“ To prevent men thinking and acting for themselves, by restraints on the
 “ press, is like the exploits of that gallant man, who thought to pound up
 “ the crows by shutting his park gate.

“ This obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event, utterly
 “ opposite to the end which it drives at: instead of suppressing books, it
 “ raises them and invests them with a reputation: the punishment of wits en-
 “ hances their authority, saith the Viscount St. Albans; and a forbidden
 “ writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth, that flies up in the face of
 “ them who seek to tread it out.”

He then adverts to his visit to the famous Galileo, whom he found and visited
 in the inquisition, “ for not thinking in Astronomy with the Franciscan and Do-
 “ minican Monks.” And what event ought more deeply to interest and effect
 us? The very laws of Nature were to bend under the rod of a Licenser;
 this illustrious Astronomer ended his life within the bars of a prison, because,
 in seeing the phases of Venus through his newly-invented telescope, he pro-
 nounced, that she shone with borrowed light, and from the Sun as the centre
 of the universe. This was the mighty crime, the placing the Sun in the cen-
 ter: that Sun which now inhabits it upon the foundation of mathematical
 truth, which enables us to traverse the pathless ocean, and to carry our line
 and rule amongst other worlds, which but for Galileo we had never known,
 perhaps even to the recesses of an infinite and immortal God.

Milton then, in his most eloquent address to the parliament, puts the liber-
 ty of the press on its true and most honourable foundation. “ Believe it,
 “ Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing of books,
 “ do as good as bid you suppress yourselves; and we will soon shew
 “ how.”

“ If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and
 “ free speaking, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild, and free,
 “ and humane Government; it is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which
 “ your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased us; liberty which is
 “ the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath ratified and enlightened
 “ our spirits like the influence of heaven; this is that which hath enfran-
 “ chised, enlarged and lifted up our apprehensions, degrees above them-
 “ selves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less knowing, less eagerly
 “ pursuing the truth, unless ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less
 “ the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant
 “ again, brutal, formal and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first
 “ become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary and tyrannous, as
 “ they were from whom ye have freed us. That our hearts are now more ca-
 “ pacious, our thoughts now more erected to the search and expectation of

“ greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in
 “ us. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according
 “ to conscience above all liberties.”

Gentlemen, I will now refer you to another Author, whose opinion you may think more in point, as having lived in our own times, and as holding the highest monarchical principles of government. I speak of Mr. Hume, who, nevertheless, considers, that this Liberty of the Press extends not only to abstract speculation, but to keep the public on their guard against all the acts of their Government.

After shewing the advantages of a Monarchy to public freedom, provided it is duly controlled and watched by the popular part of the Constitution, he says, “ These principles account for the great liberty of the press in these
 “ kingdoms, beyond what is indulged in any other government. It is apprehended, that arbitrary power would steal in upon us, were we not careful
 “ to prevent its progress, and were there not an easy method of conveying
 “ the alarm from one end of the kingdom to the other. *The spirit of the people must frequently be roused, in order to curb the ambition of the Court; and*
 “ the dread of rousing this spirit must be employed to prevent that ambition.
 “ Nothing is so effectual to this purpose as the liberty of the press, by which
 “ all the learning, wit, and genius of the nation, may be employed on the
 “ side of freedom; and every one be animated to its defence. *As long, therefore, as the republican part of our Government can maintain itself against the*
 “ *monarchical, it will naturally be careful to keep the press open, as of importance to its own preservation.*”

There is another authority co-temporary with the last, a splendid Speaker in the Upper House of Parliament, and who held during most of his time high offices under the King; I speak of the Earl of Chesterfield, who thus expressed himself in the house of Lords:—“ One of the greatest blessings,
 “ my Lord, we enjoy, is Liberty; but every good in this life has its alloy of
 “ evil—Licentiousness is the alloy of liberty, it is——.”

Lord Kenyon. Doctor Johnson claims to pluck that feather from Lord Chesterfield’s wing; he speaks, I believe, of the eye of the political body.

Mr. Erskine. Gentlemen, I have heard it said, that Lord Chesterfield borrowed that which I was just about to state, and which his Lordship has anticipated.

Lord Kenyon. That very speech which did Lord Chesterfield so much honour, is supposed to have been written by Dr. Johnson.

Mr. Erskine. Gentlemen, I believe it was so, and I am much obliged to his Lordship for giving me a far higher authority for my doctrine. For though Lord Chesterfield was a man of great ingenuity and wit, he was undoubtedly far inferior in learning and in monarchical opinion, to the celebrated writer to whom my Lord has now delivered the work by his authority. Doctor Johnson then says, “ One of the greatest blessings we enjoy, one of
 “ the greatest blessings a people, my Lords, can enjoy, is Liberty; but every
 “ good in this life has its alloy of evil: licentiousness is the alloy of Liberty: it is an ebullition, an excrescence; it is a speck upon the eye of the
 “ political body, which I can never touch but with a gentle, with a trembling hand, lest I destroy the body, lest I injure the eye upon which it is
 “ apt to appear.

“ There is such a connection between licentiousness and liberty, that it
 “ is not easy to correct the one, without dangerously wounding the other; it
 “ is extremely hard to distinguish the true limit between them: like a
 “ changeable silk, we can easily see there are two different colours, but
 “ we cannot easily discover where the one ends, or where the other begins.”

I confess, I cannot help agreeing with this learned author. The danger of touching the press is the difficulty of marking its limits. My learned friend, who has just gone out of Court, has drawn no line, and unfolded no principle. He has not told us, if this book is condemned, what book may be written. If I may not write against the existence of a monarchy, and recommend a republic, may I write against any part of the Government? May I say that we should be better without a House of Lords, or a House of Commons, or a Court of Chancery, or any other given part of our establishment? Or if, as has been hinted, a work may become libellous for stating even legal matter with sarcastic phrase, the difficulty becomes the greater, and the liberty of the press quite impossible to define.

The same author pursuing the subject and speaking of the fall of Roman liberty, says, "But this sort of liberty came soon after to be called licentiousness; for we are told that Augustus, after having established his empire, restored order in Rome by restraining licentiousness. God forbid we should in this country have order restored, or licentiousness restrained, at so dear a rate as the people of Rome paid for it to Augustus."

"Let us consider, my Lords, that arbitrary power has seldom or never been introduced into a country at once. It must be introduced by slow degrees, and as it were step by step, lest the people should see its approach. The barriers and fences of the people's liberty must be plucked up one by one, and some plausible pretences must be found for removing or hoodwinking, one after another, those sentries who are posted by the constitution of a free country, for warning the people of their danger. When these preparatory steps are once made, the people may then, indeed, with regret, see slavery and arbitrary power making long strides over their land; but it will be too late to think of preventing or avoiding the impending ruin."

"The stage, my Lords, and the press, are two of our out sentries; if we remove them, if we hoodwink them, if we throw them into fetters, the enemy may surprise us."

Gentlemen, this subject was still more lately put in the justest and most forcible light by a noble person high in the Magistracy; and whose mind is not at all turned to the introduction of disorder by improper popular excesses; I mean Lord Loughborough, chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. I believe I can answer for the correctness of my note, which I shall follow up with the opinion of another member of the Lords' house of Parliament; the present Earl Stanhope; or rather, I shall take Lord Stanhope first, as his Lordship introduces the subject by adverting to this argument of Lord Loughborough's. "If," says his Lordship, "our boasted liberty of the press, were to consist only in the liberty to write in praise of the Constitution, this is a liberty enjoyed under many arbitrary governments. I suppose it would not be deemed quite an unpardonable offence, even by the Empress of Russia, if any man were to take it into his head to write a panegyric upon the Russian form of Government. Such a liberty as that might therefore properly be termed the *Russian liberty of the Press*. But, the *English liberty of the Press* is of a very different description: for, by the law of England, it is not prohibited to publish speculative works upon the Constitution, whether *they contain praise or censure*."—*Lord Stanhope's defence of the Libel Bill*.

You see therefore, as far as the general principle goes, I am supported by the opinion of Lord Stanhope, for otherwise the noble Lord has written a libel himself, by exciting other people to write *whatever they may think*, be it good or evil, of the constitution of the country. As to the other high authority, Lord Loughborough, I will read what applies to this subject—"Every man," said Lord Loughborough, "may publish at his discretion his opinions concerning forms and systems of Government."

‘ If they be wise and enlightening, the world will gain by them; if they
 ‘ be weak and absurd, they will be laughed at and forgotten; and, if they
 ‘ be *bona fide*, they cannot be criminal, however erroneous. On the other
 ‘ hand, the purpose and the direction may give a different turn to writings
 ‘ whose common construction is harmless or even meritorious. Suppose men,
 ‘ assembled in disturbance of the peace, to pull down mills or turnpikes, or
 ‘ to do any other mischief, and that a mischievous person should disperse
 ‘ among them an excitation to the planned mischief known to both writer
 ‘ and reader, *To your tents, O Israel*; that publication would be criminal.
 ‘ But how criminal? not as a libel, not as an abstract writing; but as an
 ‘ act; and the act being the crime, *it must be stated as a fact extrinsic on the re-*
 ‘ *cord*: for, otherwise, a Court of Error could have no jurisdiction but over
 ‘ the natural construction of the writing; nor would the defendant have any
 ‘ notice of such matter at the trial, without a charge on the Record. To
 ‘ give the Jury cognizance of any matter beyond the construction of the
 ‘ writing, the averment should be in the case as I have instanced, that cer-
 ‘ tain persons were, as I have described, assembled; and that the publisher,
 ‘ intending to execute these persons so assembled, wrote *so and so*. Here the
 ‘ crime is complete and consists in an overt-act of wickedness evidenced by a
 ‘ writing.’

In answer to all these authorities, the Attorney General may say, that, if Mr. Paine had written his observations with the views of those high persons and under other circumstances, he would be protected and acquitted: to which I can only answer, that no facts or circumstances attending his work are either charged or proved; that you have no jurisdiction whatever but over the natural construction of the work before you, and that I am therefore brought without a flaw in the deduction to the passages which are the particular subject of complaint.

Gentlemen, I am not unmindful how long I have already trespassed upon your patience; and, recollecting the nature of the human mind, and how much, for a thousand reasons, I have to struggle against at this moment, I should not be disconcerted if any of you should appear anxious to retire from the pain of hearing me farther. It has been said, that my vanity has forwarded my zeal in this cause; but I might appeal even to the authors of those paragraphs, whether a situation ever existed which vanity would have been fonder to fly from—the task of speaking against every known prepossession; with every countenance, as it were, planted and lifted up against me. But I stand at this bar to give to a criminal arraigned before it, the defence which the law of the country entitles him to. If any of my arguments be indecent, or unfit for the court to hear, the noble Judge presides to interrupt them: If all, or any of them are capable of an answer, they will be answered: Or, if they be so unfounded in your own minds, who are to judge of them, as not to call for refutation, your verdict in a moment will overthrow all that has been said—We shall then have all discharged our duties—it is your’s to judge, but mine only to address your judgments.

When my Lord and I were Counsel for Lord George Gordon in 1781, it was not considered by that Jury, nor imputed to us by any body, that we were contending for the privileges of over-awing the House of Commons, or recommending the conflagration of this city: I am doing the same duty now, which my Lord and I then did in concert together; and, whatever may become of the cause, I expect to be heard: conscious that no just obloquy can be, or will (*in the end*) be cast upon me for having done my duty in the manner I have endeavoured to perform it.

Gentlemen, I come now to observe on the passages selected by the information; and with regard to the first I shall dispose of it in a moment.

“ All *hereditary* government is in its nature tyranny. An hereditary crown, or an hereditary throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are hereditary *property*. To *inherit* a government is to *inherit* the *people*, as if they were flocks and herds.”

And is it to be endured, says the Attorney General, that the people of this country are to be told that they are driven like oxen or sheep? Certainly not. I am of opinion that a more dangerous doctrine cannot be instilled into the people of England. But who instils such a doctrine? I deny it is instilled by Paine. For when he maintains that hereditary monarchy inherits a people like flocks and herds, it is clear from the context (*which is kept out of view*), that he is combating the proposition in Mr. Burke's book, which asserts, that the hereditary monarchy of England is fastened upon the people of England by indissoluble compact. Mr. Paine, on the contrary, asserts the King of England to be the *magistrate of the people*, existing by their consent, which is utterly incompatible with their being driven like herds. His argument, therefore, is this, and it retorts on his adversary: he says, such a King as you represent the King of England to be, inheriting the people by virtue of conquest, or of some compact, which, having once existed, cannot be dissolved while the original terms of it are kept, *is an inheritance like flocks and herds*. But I deny that to be the King of England's title, he is *the magistrate of the people*, and that title I respect. It is to your own imaginary King of England therefore, and not to his Majesty, that your unfounded inuendoes apply. It is the Monarchs of Russia and Prussia, and all Governments fastened upon unwilling subjects by hereditary indefeasible titles, that are stigmatised by Paine as inheriting the people like flocks. The sentence, therefore, must either be taken in the pure abstract, and then it is not only merely speculative, but the application of it to our own Government fails altogether, or it must be taken connected with the matter which constitutes the application, and then it is Mr. Burke's King of England, and not his Majesty whose title is denied.

I pass therefore to the next passage, which appears to be an extraordinary selection. It is taken at a leap from page 192 to page 204, and breaks in at the words, “ This Convention.” The sentence selected stands thus, “ This convention met at Philadelphia in May 1787, of which General Washington was elected president. He was not at that time connected with any of the state governments, or with congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

“ The Convention went deeply into all the subjects; and having after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal Constitution, the next question was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

“ For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.”

This sentence, standing thus by itself, may appear to be a mere sarcasm on King William, upon those who effected the Revolution; and upon the Revolution itself, without any reasoning or deduction: But when the context and sequel are looked at and compared, it will appear to be a serious Historical comparison between the Revolution effected in England in 1688, and the late one in America when she established her independence; and no man can doubt that his judgment on that comparison was sincere. But where is the Libel on the Constitution? for whether King William was brought over here by the sincerest and justest motives of the whole people of England, each man acting for himself, or through the motives and agencies imputed by the defendant, it signifies not one farthing at this time of day to the establishment

itself. Blackstone warns us not to fix our obedience or affection to the Government on the motives of our ancestors, or the rectitude of their reasonings, but to be satisfied that it is established. This is safe reasoning, and, for my own part, I should not be differently affected to the Constitution of my country, which my own understanding approved, whether angels or demons had given it birth.

Do any of you love the reformation the less because Henry the eighth was the author of it? Or because lust and poverty, and not religion, were his motives. He had squandered the treasures of his father, and he preferred Anne Bullen to his Queen; these were the causes which produced it.—What then! does that affect the purity of our reformed religion, undermine its establishment, or shake the King's title as Prince of the country, to the exclusion of those who held by the religion it had abolished? Will the Attorney General affirm, that I could be convicted of a libel for a whole volume of asperity against Henry the Eighth, merely because he effected the reformation; and if not, why against King William, who effected the Revolution? Where is the line to be drawn? Is one, two, or three centuries to be the statute of limitation? But do not our own historians detail this very cabal of courtiers, from the records of our own country? If you will turn to Hume's history, volume the eighth, page 188, &c. &c. you will find that he states at great length, the whole detail of intrigues which paved the way for the Revolution, and the interested coalition of parties which gave it effect.

But what of all this, concerning the motives of parties, which is recorded by Hume? The question is, *What is the thing brought about*,—NOT HOW it was brought about. If it stands as Blackstone argues it, upon the consent of our ancestors, followed up by our own, no individual can withdraw his obedience. If he dislikes the establishment, let him seek elsewhere for another; I am not contending for uncontrouled conduct, but for freedom of opinion.

With regard to what has been stated of the *Edwards* and *Henries*, and the other princes under which the author can only discover “*restrictions on power, but nothing of a constitution*,” surely my friend is not in earnest when he selects that as a libel.

Paine insists, that there was no constitution under these princes, and that English liberty was obtained from usurped power by the struggles of the people. SO SAY I. And I think it for the honor and advantage of the country that it should be known.

Was there any freedom after the original establishment of the Normans by conquest? Was not the MAGNA CHARTA wrested from John by open force of arms at Runnymede? Was it not then re-enacted whilst menacing arms were in the hands of the people? Were not its stipulations broken through, and two and forty times re-enacted by Parliament, upon the firm demand of the people in the following reigns? I protest it fills me with astonishment to hear these truths brought in question.

I was formerly called upon under the discipline of a College to maintain them, and was rewarded for being thought to have successfully maintained that our present Constitution was by no means a remnant of Saxon liberty, nor any institution of liberty, but the pure consequence of the oppression of the Norman tenures, which spreading the spirit of freedom from one end of the kingdom to another, enabled our brave fathers, inch by inch, not to conquer, *but for the first time to obtain* those privileges which are the unalienable inheritance of all mankind.

But why do we speak of the *Edwards* and *Henries*, when Hume himself expressly says, notwithstanding all we have heard to-day of the antiquity of our constitution, that our monarchy was nearly absolute till the middle of

last century? I have his book in Court, and will read it to you. It is his essay on the Liberty of the Press, vol. I. page 15.

‘ All absolute Governments, and such in a great measure was England, till the middle of the last century, *notwithstanding the numerous panegyrics on ANCIENT English Liberty*, must very much depend on the administration.’

This is Hume’s opinion; the conclusion of a grave historian from all that he finds recorded as the materials for history: and shall it be said that Mr. Paine is to be punished for writing to-day what was before written by another, who is now a distinguished classic in the language? All the verdicts in the world will not make that palatable to an impartial public, or to posterity.

The next passage arraigned is this: p. 209. ‘ The attention of the government of England, (for I rather chuse to call it by this name, than the English government) appears, since its political connection with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and with respect to regular law, there is scarcely such a thing.’

That the Government of this country is, in consequence of its connection with the Continent, and the Continental wars which it has occasioned, been continually loaded with grievous taxes, no man can dispute; and I appeal to your justice, whether this subject has not been, for years together, the constant topic of unproved declamation and grumbling?

As to what he says with regard to their hardly being such a thing as regular law, he speaks in the abstract of the complexity of our system; but does not arraign the administration of justice *in its practice*. But with regard to criticisms and structures on the general system, it has been echoed over and over again by various authors; and even from the pulpits of our country, that the law of the land is mainly defective, devoid of regularity and precision, overloaded with a variety of expensive and unnecessary forms. I have a Sermon in court written during the American war, by a person of great eloquence and piety, part of which I will read to you on this subject, in which he looks forward to an exemption of the intolerable grievances of our old legal system in the infant establishment of the New World.

“ It may be the purposes of providence, on yon western shores, to raise
“ the bulwark of a purer reformation than ever Britain patronized; to found
“ a less burthensome, more auspicious, stable, and incorruptible government
“ than ever Britain has enjoyed; and to establish there a system of law more
“ just and simple in its principles, less intricate, dubious, and dilatory in its
“ proceedings, more mild and equitable in its sanctions, more easy, and
“ more certain in its execution; wherein no man can err through ignorance of
“ what concerns him, or want justice through poverty or weakness, or escape
“ it by legal artifice, or civil privileges, or interposing power; wherein the
“ rule of conduct shall not be hidden or disguised in the language of principles
“ and customs that died with the barbarism which gave them birth;
“ wherein hasty formulas shall not dissipate the reverence that is due to the
“ tribunals and transactions of justice; wherein obsolete prescripts shall not
“ pervert, nor entangle, nor impede the administration of it, nor in any instance
“ expose it to derision or disregard; wherein misrepresentation shall have
“ no share in deciding upon right and truth; and under which no man shall
“ grow great by the wages of chicanery, or thrive by the quarrels that are
“ ruinous to his employers.”

This is ten times stronger than Mr. Paine; but who ever thought of prosecuting Mr. Cappe?

In various other instances you will find defects in our jurisprudence pointed out and lamented, and not seldom by persons called upon by their situations to

deliver the law in the seat of magistracy: therefore the author's *general* observation does not appear to be that species of attack upon the magistracy of the country, as to fall within the description of a libel.

With respect to the two Houses of Parliament, I believe I shall be able to shew you that the very person who introduced this controversy, and who certainly is considered by those who now administer the government, as a man usefully devoted to maintain the constitution of the country in the present crisis, has himself made remarks upon these Assemblies; that upon comparison you will think more severe than those which are the subject of the Attorney General's animadversion. The passage in Mr. Paine runs thus:

“ With respect to *the two Houses*, of which the English Parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.

“ But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two houses, the difference will appear so great, as to shew the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the house of Lords; and so little is this nick-named house regarded, that the people scarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest of the nation.”

The conclusion of the sentence, and which was meant by Paine as evidence of the previous assertion, the Attorney General has omitted in the information, and in his speech, it is this: “ In the debate on engaging in the Russian and Turkish war, the majority in the House of Peers in favour of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other house, which is more than double its numbers, the majority was sixty-three.

The terms, however, in which Mr. Burke speaks of the House of Lords, are still more expressive. “ It is something more than a century ago, since we voted the house of Lords useless. They have now voted themselves so, and the whole hope of reformation” (*speaking of the House of Commons*) “ is cast upon us.” This sentiment, Mr. Burke not only expressed in his place in parliament, where no man can call him to an account: but it has been since repeatedly printed amongst his other valuable works. And his opinion of BOTH THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, which I am about to read to you, was originally published as a pamphlet, and applied to the settled habitual abuses of these high assemblies. Remember, I do not use them as *argumenta ad hominem*, or *ad invidiam* against the author, for if I did, it could be no defence of Mr. Paine. But I use them as high authority, the work * having been the just foundation of substantial and lasting reputation. Would to God that any part of it were capable of being denied or doubted.

“ Against the being of parliament I am satisfied no designs have ever been entertained since the Revolution. Every one must perceive that it is strongly the interest of the Court to have some second cause interposed between the ministers and the people. The gentlemen of the House of Commons have an interest equally strong, in sustaining the part of that intermediate cause. However they may hire out the *usufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the *fee and inheritance*. Accordingly those who have been of the most known devotion to the will and pleasure of a court, have at the same time been most forward in asserting an high authority in the House of Commons. *When they knew who were to use that authority, and how it was to be employed, they thought it never could be carried too far.* It must

* Mr. Burke's Thoughts on the cause of the present Discontents, published in 1775.

‘ be always the wish of an unconstitutional statesman, that an House of Commons, *who are entirely dependent upon him, should have every right of the people dependent upon their pleasure.* FOR IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE FORMS OF A FREE, AND THE ENDS OF AN ARBITRARY GOVERNMENT, WERE THINGS NOT ALTOGETHER INCOMPATIBLE.

‘ The power of the crown, almost dead and rotten as Prerogative, has grown up anew, with much more strength and far less odium, under the name of influence. In influence which operates without noise and violence; which converts the very antagonist into the instrument of power; which contains in itself a perpetual principle of growth and renovation; and which the distresses and the prosperity of the country equally tend to augment, was an admirable substitute for a Prerogative, that being only the offspring of antiquated prejudices, had moulded in its original stamina irresistible principles of decay and dissolution. The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary system; but the interest of active men in the state is a foundation perpetual and infallible.’

Mr. Burke therefore, in page 66, speaking of the same court party, says :

‘ Parliament was indeed the great object of all these politics, the end at which they aimed, as well as the INSTRUMENT by which they were to operate.’

And pursuing the subject in page 70, proceeds as follows :

‘ They who will not conform their conduct to the public good, and cannot support it by the prerogative of the crown, have adopted a new plan. They have totally abandoned the shattered and old-fashioned fortrefs of prerogative, and made a lodgement in the strong hold of parliament itself. If they have any evil design to which there is no ordinary legal power commensurate, they bring it into parliament. *There the whole is executed from the beginning to the end. And the power of obtaining their object absolute; and the safety in the proceeding perfect; no rules to confine, nor after reckonings to terrify.* For parliament cannot with any great propriety punish others for things in which they themselves have been ACCOMPLICES. Thus its controul upon the executory power is lost; because it is made to partake in every considerable act of government, *and impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the Constitution, is in danger of being lost even to the idea of it.*

‘ Until this time, the opinion of the people, through the power of an Assembly, still in some sort popular, led to the greatest honours and emoluments in the gift of the crown. Now the principle is reversed; and the favour of the court is the only sure way of obtaining and holding those honours which ought to be IN THE DISPOSAL OF THE PEOPLE.’

Mr. Burke, in page 100, observes with great truth, that the mischiefs he complained of, did not at all arise from the Monarchy, but from the parliament, and that it was the duty of the people to look to it. He says, ‘ The distempers of monarchy were the great subjects of apprehension and redress, in the *last century*; in *this*, the distempers of parliament.’

Not the distempers of parliament in this year or the last, but in *this century*, i. e. its settled habitual distemper. ‘ It is not in parliament alone that the remedy for parliamentary disorders can be compleated; and hardly indeed can it begin there. Until a confidence in government is re-established, the people ought to be *excited* to a more strict and detailed attention to the conduct of their representatives. Standards for judging more systematically upon their conduct ought to be settled in the meetings of counties and

‘ corporations, and frequent and correct lists of the voters in all important questions ought to be procured.

‘ By such means something may be done, since it may appear who those are, that by an indiscriminate support of all administrations, have totally banished all integrity and confidence out of the public proceedings; have confounded the best men with the worst; and weakened and dissolved, instead of strengthening and compacting the general frame of government.’

I wish it was possible to read the whole of this most important volume—but the consequences of these truths contained in it were all eloquently summed up by the author in his speech upon the reform of the household.

‘ But what I confess was uppermost with me, what I bent the whole course of my mind to, was the reduction of that corrupt influence which is itself the perennial spring of all prodigality and disorder; which loads us more than millions of debt; which takes away vigour from our arms, wisdom from our councils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of our constitution.’

The same important truths were held out to the whole public, upon a still later occasion, by the person now at the head of his Majesty’s councils; and so high (as it appears) in the confidence of the nation. *He*, not in the abstract like the author before you, but upon the spur of the occasion, and in the teeth of what had been just declared in the House of Commons, came to, and acted upon resolutions which are contained in this book.* Resolutions pointed to the purification of a parliament, dangerously corrupted into the very state described by Mr. Paine. Remember here too, that I impute no censure to Mr. Pitt. It was the most brilliant passage in his life, and I should have thought his life a better one, if he had continued uniform in the support of opinions, which it is said he has not changed, and which certainly have had nothing to change them. But at all events, I have a right to make use of the authority of his splendid talents and situation, not merely to protect the defendant, but the public, and to resist the precedent, That what one man may do in England with approbation and glory, shall conduct another man to a pillory or a prison.

It was the abuses pointed out by the man before you, that led that Right Hon. Gentleman to associate with many others of his rank, under the banners of the Duke of Richmond, whose name stands at the head of the list, and to pass various resolutions, concerning the absolute necessity of purifying the House of Commons; and we collect the plan from a preamble entered in the book. ‘ Whereas the life, liberty and property of every man is or may be affected by the law of the land in which he lives, and every man is bound to pay obedience to the same.

‘ And whereas, by the constitution of this kingdom the right of making laws is vested in three estates, of King, Lords, and Commons, in parliament assembled, and the consent of all the three said estates, comprehending the whole community, is necessary to make laws to bind the whole community. And whereas the House of Commons represent all the Commons of the realm, and the consent of the House of Commons binds the consent of all the Commons of the realm, and in all cases on which the legislature is competent to decide.

‘ And whereas no man is, or can be actually represented who hath not a vote in the election of his representative.

‘ And whereas it is the right of every Commoner of this realm (infants, persons of insane mind, and criminals incapacitated by law, only excepted) to have a vote in the election of the representative who is to give his consent to the making of laws by which he is to be bound.

‘ And whereas the number of persons who are suffered to vote for electing the members of the House of Commons, do not at this time amount to one-

* Mr. Erskine took up a book.

‘ sixth part of the whole Commons of this realm, whereby farⁿ the greater
 ‘ part of the said Commons are deprived of their right to elect their repre-
 ‘ sentatives; and the consent of the majority of the whole community to the
 ‘ passing of laws, is given by persons whom they have not delegated for such
 ‘ purposes; and to which the said majority have not in fact consented by them-
 ‘ selves or by their representatives.

‘ And whereas the state of election of members of the House of Com-
 ‘ mons, hath in process of time so grossly deviated from its simple and na-
 ‘ tural principle of representation and equality, that in several places, the
 ‘ members are returned by the property of one man; that the smallest boroughs
 ‘ send as many members as the largest counties, and that a majority of the
 ‘ representatives of the whole nation are chosen by a number of votes not ex-
 ‘ ceeding twelve thousand.’

These with many others, were published, not as abstract speculative writ-
 ings, but within a few days after the House of Commons had declared that
 no such rights existed, and that no alteration was necessary in the representation.
 It was then that they met at the Thatched House, and published their opinions
 and resolutions to the country at large.—Were any of them prosecuted for
 these proceedings? Certainly not, (for they were legal proceedings.) But I
 desire you as men of honour and truth, to compare all this with Mr. Paine’s
 expression of the Minister’s touching Parliament with his opiate wand, and
 let equal justice be done—that is all I ask—let all be punished or none—do not
 let Mr. Paine be held out to the contempt of the public upon the score of his
 observations on parliament, while others are enjoying all the sweets which
 attend a supposed attachment to their country, who have said the same things,
 and reduced their opinions to practice.

But now every man is to be cried down for such opinions. I observed that
 my learned friend significantly raised his voice in naming Mr. Horne Tooke,
 as if to connect him with Paine, or Paine with him. This is exactly the same
 course of justice; for after all he said nothing of Mr. Tooke. What could he
 have said, but that he was a subscriber with the great names I have read in
 these proceedings, which they have thought fit to desert?

Gentlemen, let others hold their opinions, and change them at their pleasure;
 I shall ever maintain it to be the dearest privilege of the people of Great Britain
 to watch over every thing that affects their good government, either in the sys-
 tem, or in the practice; and that for this purpose the press must be free. It
 has always been so, and much evil has been corrected by it.—If govern-
 ment finds itself annoyed by it, let it examine its own conduct, and it will
 find the cause,—let it amend it, and it will find the remedy.

Gentlemen, I am no friend to sarcasms in the discussion of grave subjects,
 but you must take writers according to the view of the mind at the moment;
 Mr. Burke as often as any body indulges in it;—hear his reason in his speech
 on reform, for not taking away the salaries from Lords who attend upon the
 British Court. “You would,” said he, “have the court deserted by all the
 “ nobility of the kingdom.

“ Sir, the most serious mischiefs would follow such a desertion. Kings are
 “ naturally lovers of low company; they are so elevated above all the rest
 “ of mankind, that they must look upon all their subjects as on a level: they
 “ are rather apt to hate than to love their nobility, on account of the occasi-
 “ onal resistance to their will, which will be made by their virtue, their petu-
 “ lance, or their pride. It must indeed be admitted, that many of the no-
 “ bility are as perfectly willing to act the part of flatterers, tale bearers,
 “ parasites, pimps, and buffoons, as any of the lowest and vilest of mankind
 “ can possibly be. But they are not properly qualified for this object of their
 “ ambition. The want of a regular education, and early habits, with some
 “ lurking remains of their dignity, will never permit them to become a
 “ match for an Italian eunuch, a mountebank, a fidler, a player, or any re-

“gular practitioner of that tribe. The Roman Emperors, almost from the beginning, threw themselves into such hands; and the mischief increased every day, till its decline and its final ruin. It is, therefore, of very great importance (provided the thing is not overdone,) to contrive such an establishment as must, almost whether a prince will or not, bring into daily and hourly offices about his person, a great number of his first nobility; and it is rather an useful prejudice that gives them a pride in such a servitude; though they are not much the better for a court, a court will be much the better for them. I have, therefore, not attempted to reform any of the offices of honour about the King’s person.”

What is this but saying that a King is an animal so incurably addicted to low company, as generally to bring on by it the ruin of nations: but nevertheless, he is to be kept as a necessary evil, and his propensities bridled by surrounding him with a parcel of miscreants still worse if possible, but better than those he would choose for himself?—This therefore, if taken by itself, would be a most abominable and libellous sarcasm on Kings and Nobility: but look at the whole speech, and you observe a great system of regulation; and no man, I believe, ever doubted Mr. Burke’s attachment to monarchy. To judge, therefore, of any part of a writing, the whole must be read.

With the same view I mean to read to you the beginning of Harrington’s Oceana: but it is impossible to name this well known author without exposing to just contempt and ridicule the ignorant or profligate misrepresentations which are vomited forth upon the public, to bear down every man as desperately wicked, who in any age or country has countenanced a Republic, for the mean purpose of prejudging this trial.

[Mr. Erskine took up a book, but laid it down again without reading from it, saying something to a gentleman who sat near him, in a low voice, which I did not hear.]

Is this the way to support the English constitution? Are these the means by which Englishmen are to be taught to cherish it? I say, if the man upon trial were stained with blood instead of ink,—if he were covered over with crimes which human nature would start at the naming of, the means employed against him would not be the less disgraceful.

For this notable purpose then, Harrington, not above a week ago, was handed out to us as a low, obscure wretch, involved in the murder of the Monarch, and the destruction of Monarchy, and as addressing his despicable works at the shrine of an Usurper. Yet this very Harrington, this low blackguard, was descended (you may see his pedigree at the Herald’s Office for sixpence,) from eight Dukes, three Marquesses, seventy Earls, twenty-seven Viscounts, and thirty-six Barons, sixteen of whom were Knights of the Garter; a descent which I think would save a man from disgrace in any of the circles of Germany. But what was he besides—A BLOOD-STAINED RUSSIAN? Oh brutal ignorance of the history of the Country! He was the most affectionate servant of Charles the First, from whom he never concealed his opinions; for it is observed by Wood, that the King greatly affected his company; but when they happened to talk of a Common-wealth, he would scarcely endure it.—‘I know not,’ says Toland, ‘which most to commend; the King for trusting an honest man, though a Republican; or Harrington for owning his principles while he served a King.’

But did his opinions affect his conduct?—Let History again answer.—He preserved his fidelity to his unhappy Prince to the very last, after all his fawning courtiers had left him to his enraged subjects. He staid with him while a prisoner in the Isle of Wight; came up by stealth to follow the fortunes of his monarch: a master; even hid himself in the boot of the coach when he was conveyed to Windsor; and ending as he began, fell into his arms and fainted on the scaffold.

After Charles's death, the *Oceana* was written, and, as if it were written from justice and affection to his memory: for it breathes the same noble and spirited regard, and asserts that it was not Charles that brought on the destruction of the monarchy, but the feeble and ill constituted nature of monarchy itself.

But the book was a flattery to Cromwell.—Once more and finally let history decide.

It was seized by the Usurper as a libel, and the way it was recovered is remarkable. I mention it to shew that Cromwell was a wise man in himself, and knew on what governments must stand for their support.

Harrington waited on his daughter to beg for his book, on entering her apartment, snatched up her child and ran away.—On her following him with surprize and terror, he turned to her and said, "I know what you feel as a mother, feel then for me; your father has got my child:" meaning the *Oceana*. The *Oceana* was afterwards restored on her petition; Cromwell answering with the sagacity of a sound politician, "Let him have his book: if my government is made to stand, it has nothing to fear from PAPER SHOT."—He said true.—No good government will ever be battered by paper shot. Montesquieu says that, "In a free nation, it matters not whether individuals reason well or ill; it is sufficient that they do reason. Truth arises from the collision, and from hence springs liberty, which is a security from the effect of reasoning." The Attorney General read extracts from Mr. Adams's answer to this book. Let others do like Mr. Adams: I am not insisting upon the infallibility of Mr. Paine's doctrines; if they are erroneous, let them be answered, and truth will spring from the collision.

A disposition in a nation to this species of controversy, is no proof of sedition or degeneracy, but quite the reverse, as is mentioned by Milton, [I omitted to cite the passage with the others] who in speaking of this subject, rises into that inexpressibly sublime stile of writing, wholly peculiar to himself. He was indeed no plagiarist from any thing human: he looked up for light and expression, as he himself wonderfully describes it, by devout prayer to that great Being, who is the source of all utterance and knowledge; and who sendeth out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altars to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. 'When the cheerfulness of the people,' says this mighty poet, 'is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see, in my mind, a noble and puissant nation rousing herself, like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.'

Gentlemen, what Milton only saw in his mighty imagination, I see in fact; what he expected, but which never came to pass, I see now fulfilling: methinks I see this noble and puissant nation, not degenerated and drooping to fatal decay, but casting off the wrinkled skin of corruption to put on again the vigour of her youth.

And it is because others as well as myself see this, that we have all this uproar:—France and its constitution are the mere pretences. It is, because

Britons begin to recollect the inheritance of their own constitution, left them by their ancestors: It is, because they are awakened to the corruptions which have fallen upon its most valuable parts, that forsooth the nation is in danger of being destroyed by a single pamphlet.

Gentlemen, I have marked the course of this alarm: It began with the renovation of those exertions for the public, which the authors of the alarm had themselves originated and deserted: and they became louder and louder when they saw these principles avowed and supported by my admirable and excellent friend Mr. Fox: the most eminently honest and enlightened statesman, that history brings us acquainted with: a man whom to name is to honour, but whom in attempting adequately to describe, I must fly to Mr. Burke, my constant refuge when eloquence is necessary: a man who to relieve the sufferings of the most distant nation, "put to the hazard his ease, his security, his interest, his power, even his darling popularity for the benefit of a people whom he had never seen." How much more then for the inhabitants of his native country! yet this is the man who has been censured and disavowed in the manner we have lately seen.

Gentlemen, I have but a few more words to trouble you with: I take my leave of you with declaring, that this freedom which I have been endeavouring to assert, is no more than the freedom which belongs to our own inbred constitution: I have not asked you to acquit Mr. Paine upon any new lights, or upon any principle but the law, which you are sworn to administer: My great object has been to inculcate, that wisdom and policy, which are the parents of Great Britain, forbid this jealous eye over her subjects; and that, on the contrary, they cry aloud in the language of the poet, employed by Lord Chatham on the memorable subject of America, unfortunately without effect:

"Be to their faults a little blind,
 "Be to their virtues very kind;
 "Let all their thoughts be unconfin'd,
 "And clap your padlock on the mind."

Engage them by their affections, convince their reason, and they will be loyal from the only principle that can make loyalty sincere, vigorous, or rational, a conviction that it is their true interest, and that their form of government is for their common good. Constraint is the natural parent of resistance, and a pregnant proof, that reason is not on the side of those who use it. You must all remember, gentlemen, Lucian's pleasant story; Jupiter and a countryman were walking together, conversing with great familiarity on the subject of heaven and earth. The countryman listened with attention and acquiescence, while Jupiter strove only to convince him; but happening to hint a doubt, Jupiter turned hastily round and threatened him with his thunder.—"Ah! ha!" says the countryman, "now, Jupiter, I know that you are wrong; you're always wrong when you appeal to your thunder."

This is the case with me—I can reason with the people of England, but I cannot fight against the thunder of authority.

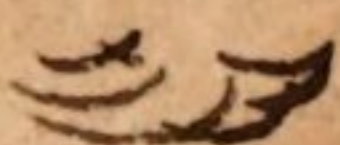
Gentlemen, this is my defence for free opinions. With regard to myself, I am, and ever have been, obedient and affectionate to *the law*: to that rule of action, as long as I exist, I shall ever give my voice and my conduct; but I shall ever do as I have done to-day, maintain the dignity of my high profession, and perform, as I understand them, all its important duties.

[Mr. Attorney General arose immediately to reply to Mr. Erskine, when Mr. Campbell (the foreman of the Jury) said,—My Lord, I am authorized by the Jury here, to inform the Attorney General, that a reply is not necessary for them, unless the Attorney General wishes to make it, or your Lordship—Mr. Attorney General sat down, and the Jury gave in their verdict,

GUILTY.

F I N I S.

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Paine, Thomas,

The works of Thomas Paine

London 1796

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